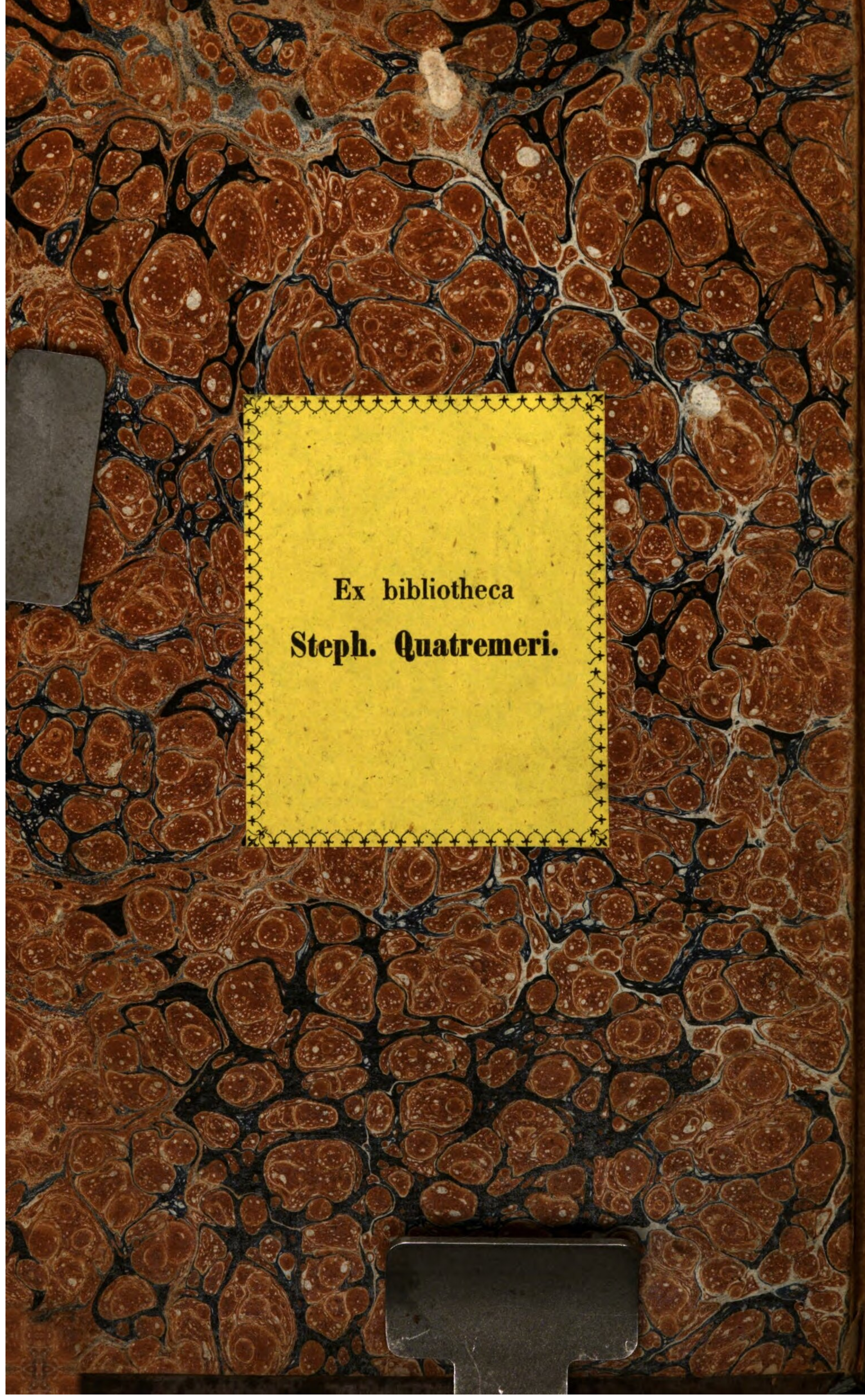


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Fac. Simile of a Codex-Rescriptus of Saint Matthew's Gospel, in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

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AN
INTRODUCTION
TO THE
Critical Study and Knowledge
OF THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BY THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE, A. M.

ILLUSTRATED WITH MAPS AND FAC-SIMILES OF BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPTS.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES,
IN THE STRAND.

1818.

INTRODUCTION

OF THE
ART OF

SECOND VOLUME

Critical Study and Bibliography



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- Page 7, note, line 2, after No. 4. *add* p. 560.
205, note †, *dele* Chapter XI. Sect. II. *infra.* and *read* Vol. II. pp. 225—230.
213, note, *read* Chap. XIV. Sect. I. Canon iii.
242, note †, *for* Sect. iv. *read* Sect. vii.
245, line 28, *for* three farthings, *read* three quarters of a farthing.
246, line 9, *for* farthing, *read* halfpenny.
372, line 22, *after* oryx *add* an asterisk *.
409, line 1 of the notes, *after* (v. 24—27.) *add* probavit.
623, note *, *read* Turretin.

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- Page 123, line 24, *read* Aldebaran.
128, line 15, *for* as well as, *read* so well as.
132, line 1 of notes, *read* p. 112.
164, line 1 of note, *read* Talmudical.
165, line 1 of note, *for* Dr. *read* D'.
337, line 1 of note * *for* lib. v. *read* lib. xv.
393, line 15, *for* fourteen *read* seven.
394, line 3, *for* 14 *read* 7.

In Vol. II. pp. 261, 262, some ideas have accidentally been repeated, which had been discussed at length in Vol. I. pp. 393—396. For this repetition the reader's indulgence is requested.

ON
THE CRITICAL
STUDY AND KNOWLEDGE
OF THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

PART III.

ON THE ANALYSIS OF SCRIPTURE.

BOOK I.

OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE CANON, &c. OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

- I. *Different appellations given to the Scriptures.*—II. *Their canonical authority and inspiration.*—III. *Number of books.*—IV. *History of the canon—Proofs that the Old Testament has not been corrupted.*—V. *Antient and modern divisions of the Old Testament—Origin of chapters and verses.*—VI. *Account of early English translations, and of the present authorized version—Its merit and excellencies.*
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I. THE collection of writings, which is regarded by Christians as the sole standard of their faith and practice, has been distinguished, at various periods, by different appellations. Thus, it is frequently termed the Scriptures, the Sacred or Holy Scriptures, and sometimes the Canonical Scriptures. This

collection is called *The Scriptures*, as being the most important of all *writings*;—the *Holy* or *Sacred* Scriptures, because they were composed by persons divinely inspired;—and the *Canonical* Scriptures, either because they are a rule of faith and practice to those who receive them; or because, when the number and authenticity of these books were ascertained, lists of them were inserted in the ecclesiastical *canons* or catalogues, in order to distinguish them from such books as were *apocryphal* or of uncertain authority, and unquestionably not of divine origin. But the most usual appellation is that of the BIBLE—a word which in its primary import simply denotes a book, but which is given to the writings of the prophets and apostles, by way of eminence, as being the Book of Books, infinitely superior in excellence to every unassisted production of the human mind*.

II. The most common and general division of the canonical books is that of the Old and New Testament; the former containing those revelations of the divine will which were communicated to the Hebrews, Israelites, or Jews, before the birth of Christ, and the latter comprizing the inspired writings of the evangelists and apostles. The appellation of Testament is derived from 2 Cor. iii. 6. 14; in which place the words *ἡ παλαια διαθήκη* and *ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη* are by the old Latin translators rendered *antiquum testamentum* and *novum testamentum*, old and new testaments, instead of *antiquum fœdus* and *novum fœdus*, the *old and new covenants*: for, although the Greek word *διαθήκη* signifies both testament and covenant, yet it uniformly corresponds with the Hebrew word *Berith*, which constantly signifies a covenant†. The term “old covenant,” used by Saint Paul in 2 Cor. iii. 14. does not denote the entire collection of writings which we term the Bible, but those antient institutions, promises, threatenings, and in short the whole of the Mosaic dispensation, related in the Pentateuch, and in the writings of the prophets; and which in process of time were, by a metonymy, transferred to the books themselves. Thus, we find mention made of the *book of the covenant* in Exodus (xxiv. 7.) and in the apocryphal book of Maccabees (Macc. i. 57.): and, after the example of the apostle, the same mode of designating the sacred writings obtained among the first Christians, from whom it has been transmitted to modern times‡.

The Old Testament, of which it is here proposed to treat,

* Lardner's Works, vol. vi. pp. 1—8. Jahn, Introd. ad Vet. Fœd. p. 7.

† Jerome, Comment. in Malachi, cap. ii. op. tom. iii. p. 1816.

‡ Dr. Lardner has collected several passages from early Christian writers, who thus metonymically use the word Testament. Works, vol. vi. p. 9.

“comprehends all those sacred books, which were written by the descendants of Israel—a people selected by God for important purposes, to “be a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation *.” Among this people, successive prophets and inspired writers were appointed by God to convey such prophecies and instructions as were instrumental to the designs of his providence. As these Scriptures were produced, they were admitted into the sacred volume; which by gradual accumulation at length increased to its present size. These being delivered to the Hebrews, in their own language †, with every mark that could characterize divine revelations, were received with reverence, and preserved with the most anxious care and attention. Such only were accepted, as proceeded from persons unquestionably invested with the prophetic character ‡, or evidently authorized by a divine commission, who acted under the sanction of public appointment and miraculous support. The books, which contained the precepts of the prophets, contained also the proofs of their inspiration, and the testimonies of their character. By recording contemporary events they appealed to well-known evidence of their authority, their impartiality, and their adherence to truth: and every succeeding prophet confirmed the character of his predecessor, by relating the accomplishment of prophecy in the history of his own period; or bore testimony to his pretensions, by repeating and explaining his predictions.” §

III. The Old Testament, according to our Bibles, comprizes thirty-nine books, viz. the Pentateuch or five books of Moses, the book of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I. and II. Samuel, I. and II. Kings, I. and II. Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, the Prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah with his Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah, and Malachi.

* Exod. xix. 6. xxxiii. 16. Levit. xx. 24, 26. Psal. cxlvii. 19. Rom. iii. 2. ix. 4.

† With the exception, however, of a few passages which are in the Chaldee dialect. See vol. i. p. 224. *supra*.

‡ Josephus contr. Apion. lib. i. § 8.

§ Dr. Gray's Key to the Old Testament, &c. p. 2. The further discussion of the evidences for the divine authority of the Old Testament is designedly omitted, on account of the space which such a discussion would require, and also because the subject has recently been treated by Mr. Haldane, at very considerable length, in his treatise on “The Evidence and Authority of Divine Revelation,” 8vo. 2 vols. Edinburgh and London.—The reader, who may not have an opportunity of consulting this work, will find the divine authority of the Scriptures briefly, but ably, treated in Dr. Jenkin's “Certainty and Reasonableness of Christianity,” vol. i. chapters 1—10; and also in the first volume of Dr. O. Gregory's Letters on the Evidences, &c. of the Christian Religion.

But, among the antient Jews, they formed only twenty-two books *, according to the letters of their alphabet, which were twenty-two in number; reckoning Judges and Ruth, Ezra and Nehemiah, Jeremiah and his Lamentations, and the twelve minor prophets, (so called from the comparative brevity of their compositions) respectively, as one book. That these books and no others were received by the Jewish and antient Christian church, as sacred and canonical, is manifest, not only from the references made to the law, the prophets, and the Psalms, (the ordinary divisions of the Jewish Scriptures) by Jesus Christ, and by the sacred writers in the subsequent parts of the New Testament †; but also from the united testimonies of Josephus ‡ and Philo §, of the authors of the several Greek translations, as well as of the old Syriac Peschito version, by whom the whole of the Jewish writings were translated as canonical: to these may be added the testimonies of Melito ||, Origen **, Jerome ††, Epiphanius ‡‡, the author of the Synopsis of Scripture attributed to Athanasius §§, the Talmud, the confession of faith of the modern Jews |||, and the uniform belief of all Christians to the present time.

IV. The arrangement of the books comprizing the Old Testament, which is adopted in our Bibles, is not always regulated by the exact time when the books were respectively written; although the book of Genesis is universally admitted to be the first, and the prophecy of Malachi to be the latest of the inspired writings. Previously to the building of Solomon's temple, the Pentateuch was deposited "in the side of the ark of the covenant" (Deut. xxxi. 24—26), to be consulted by the Israel-

* Josephus contr. Apion. lib. i. § 8. Origen, Philocalia, c. 3. cited in Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 25.

† Among very many passages that might be adduced, see Matt. xi. 13. and xxii. 40. Luke xvi. 16. xx. 42. xxiv. 25, 44. Acts i. 20. iii. 22. vii. 35—37. xxvi. 22. and xxviii. 23. Rom. x. 5. 2 Cor. iii. 7—15. Heb. vii. 14. and x. 28. 2 Tim. iii. 14—17.

‡ Josephus, *ut supra*.

§ Philo de Vitâ Mosis, lib. ii.

|| Apud Eusebium, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 26. Melito was Bishop of Sardis towards the close of the second century.

** In the middle of the third century. See his works, tom. ii. p. 529. and in Eusebius, lib. vi. c. 25.

†† Towards the close of the fourth century, in his *Prologus Galeatus*, and *Epist. ad Paulinum*.

‡‡ In the fourth century. Hæres. xxix. Opp. tom. i. p. 122. *et seq.*

§§ Athanasii op. tom. ii. pp. 126—204. Dr. Lardner has given the most material extracts from this Synopsis, respecting the canon of Scripture. Works, vol. iv. p. 289. *et seq.*

||| This confession is given at length in Mr. Butler's *Horæ Biblicæ*, vol. i. p. 93.

ites: and, after the erection of that sacred edifice, it was deposited in the treasury, together with all the succeeding productions of the inspired writers. On the subsequent destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, the autographs of the sacred books are supposed to have perished: although some learned men have conjectured that they were preserved, because it does not appear that Nebuchadnezzar evinced any particular enmity against the Jewish religion, and in the account of the sacred things carried to Babylon, (2 Kings xxv. 2 Chron. xxxvi. Jer. liii.) no mention is made of the sacred books. However this may be, it is a fact, that copies of these autographs were carried to Babylon: for we find the prophet Daniel quoting the law (Dan. ix. 11. 13), and also expressly mentioning the prophecies of Jeremiah (ix. 2), which he could not have done, if he had never seen them. We are further informed that on the rebuilding, or rather on the finishing, of the temple in the sixth year of Darius, the Jewish worship was fully re-established according "as it is written in the book of Moses" (Ezra vi. 18): which would have been impracticable, if the Jews had not had copies of the law then among them. But what still more clearly proves that they must have had transcripts of their sacred writings during, as well as subsequent to, the Babylonish captivity, is the fact, that when the people requested Ezra to produce the law of Moses (Nehem. viii. 1), they did not entreat him to get it dictated *anew* to them; but that he should bring forth "the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel."

About fifty years after the rebuilding of the temple, and the consequent re-establishment of the Jewish religion, it is generally admitted that the canon of the Old Testament was settled; but by whom this great work was accomplished, is a question on which there is a considerable difference of opinion. On the one hand it is contended that it could not have been done by Ezra himself; because, though he has related his zealous efforts in restoring the law and worship of Jehovah, yet on the settlement of the canon he is totally silent; and the silence of Nehemiah, who has recorded the pious labours of Ezra, as well as the silence of Josephus, who is diffuse in his encomiums on him, has further been urged as a presumptive argument why he could not have collected the Jewish writings. But to these hypothetical reasonings we may oppose the constant tradition of the Jewish church, uncontradicted both by their enemies and by Christians, that Ezra, with the assistance of the members of the great synagogue (among whom were the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi), did collect as many copies of the sacred writings as

he could, and from them set forth a correct edition of the canon of the Old Testament, with the exception of his own writings, the book of Nehemiah, and the prophecy of Malachi; which were subsequently annexed to the canon by Simeon the Just, who is said to have been the last of the great synagogue. In this Esdrine text, the errors of former copyists were corrected: and Ezra (being himself an inspired writer) added in several places, throughout the books of this edition, what appeared necessary to illustrate, connect, or complete them *. Whether Ezra's own copy of the Jewish Scriptures perished in the pillage of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes, is a question that cannot now be ascertained: "nor is it material, since we know that Judas Maccabæus repaired the temple, and replaced every thing requisite for the performance of divine worship, (1 Macc. iv. 36—59). which included a correct, if not Ezra's own, copy of the Scriptures." † It has been conjectured, and it is not improbable, that in this latter temple an ark was constructed, in which the sacred books of the Jews were preserved until the destruction of Jerusalem and the subversion of the Jewish polity by the Romans under Titus, before whom the volume of the law was carried in triumph, among the other spoils which had been taken at Jerusalem. ‡ Since that time, although there has been no certain standard edition of the Old Testament, yet we have seen § that both Jews and Christians have constantly had the *same* Hebrew Scriptures to which they have always appealed, so that we have every possible evidence to prove that the Old Testament has been transmitted to us entire, and free from any material or designed corruption.

Many additional considerations might be urged to prove that the Scriptures have come down to us entire and uncorrupted: of these, it may suffice to state two or three.

1. Being given by Jehovah to mankind as a rule of faith and practice, if the genuine reading were lost, they could no longer be a standard of universal belief and practice, and thus the design of God would be frustrated:—a conclusion this, which is not more absurd in itself than derogatory to the divine wisdom.

2. If the Jews had *mutilated* these writings, they would doubtless have expunged from them every relation of facts and events

* Prideaux's *Connexion*, part i. book v. sub anno 446. vol. i. pp. 329—344, and the authorities there cited. Carpzov. *Introd. ad Libros Biblicos Vet. Test.* pp. 24. 308, 309.

† Bishop Tomline's *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. i. p. 11.

‡ Josephus de Bell. Jud. lib. vii. c. 5. § 5.

§ See § iii. p. 4, *supra*.

that militated against their character or the honour of their nation. —If they had wilfully corrupted the books of the Old Testament *before* the time of Christ and his apostles, the prophets who flourished from Samuel to Malachi, and who were neither slow nor timid in reproving the sins both of rulers and subjects, would not have passed over so heinous an offence in silence: neither would they have been spared by our Saviour and his apostles, who rebuked the Jews of their day with so much severity. And if the Old Testament had been corrupted *after* the birth of Christ, the Jews would unquestionably have expunged those memorable prophecies concerning him, which were so irrefragably cited both by Christ and his apostles: but no such obliteration or alteration has ever been made.

3. In fact neither before nor after the time of Christ could the Jews corrupt or falsify the Hebrew Scriptures: for, *before* that event, these books, especially the Pentateuch and prophets, were constantly read in public: the multitude of original copies, as well as of translations, which would be requisite for the Sabbath-service of so many synagogues in different parts of the then known world—not to mention the transcripts which their kings were required to make, (Deut. xvii. 18, &c.) and the copies necessary in private families, in order that the Jews might study for themselves, and also teach the law to their children (Deut. xi. 18—20), are all so many proofs of the impracticability of any attempt to corrupt or falsify their scriptures in any the slightest possible degree; and, after the sacred canon was closed, the Jews were divided into so many sects and parties, each of whom watched over the others with the greatest jealousy, as to render such an attempt impossible. And, *after the birth of Christ*, these books were in the hands of Christians, who would instantly have detected the malice and fraud of the Jews, if they had endeavoured to accomplish such a design; which indeed would not have been practicable, from the moral impossibility of the Jews (who were dispersed in every country of the then known world) being able to collect all the existing copies, with the design of corrupting them.

4. The reverence of the Jews for their sacred writings is another guarantee for their genuineness and integrity: so great indeed was that reverence, that according to the statement of Philo *, they would suffer any torments, and even death itself, rather than change a single point or iota of the Scriptures. A law was also enacted by them, which denounced him to be

* Philo, apud Euseb. de Præp. Evang. lib. viii. c. 2.

guilty of inexpressible sin who should presume to make the slightest possible alteration in their sacred books.

5. Lastly, it is absolutely impossible that *every* manuscript, whether in the original Hebrew, or in any antient version or paraphrase, should or could be *designedly* altered or falsified in the *same* passages, without detection either by Jews or Christians. The manuscripts now extant are confessedly liable to errors and mistakes from the carelessness, negligence, or inaccuracy of copyists: but they are not all uniformly incorrect throughout, nor in the same words or passages; but what is incorrect in one place is correct in another.

And hence arises the importance, as well as the necessity, of collating all the existing manuscripts and versions, in order to restore the genuine text of Scripture; which collation has been executed with equal felicity and ability by Dr. Kennicott and M. de Rossi for the Hebrew Scriptures, and by Dr. Holmes and Mr. Parsons for the Septuagint version. And although the various readings, thus discovered by them, amount to many thousands, yet these differences are of so little real moment, that their laborious collations afford us scarcely any opportunities of correcting the sacred text in important passages. So far, however, are these extensive and profound researches from being either trivial or nugatory, that we have in fact derived from them “the greatest advantage which could have been wished for by any real friend of revealed religion; namely, the certain knowledge of the agreement of the copies of the antient Scriptures, now extant in their original language, with each other, and with our Bibles.” *

V. The various books comprized in the Old Testament were divided by the Jews into three parts or classes—the Law,—the Prophets—and the Cetubim, or Hagiographa, that is, the Holy Writings: which division obtained in the time of our Saviour, † and is noticed by Josephus, ‡ though he does not enumerate the several books.

* Bishop Tomline's Elements of Christ. Theol. vol. i. p. 13.

† “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things might be fulfilled which are written in the *Law*, and in the *Prophets*, and in the *Psalms*, concerning me,” (Luke xxiv. 44). In which passage, by the *Psalms* is intended the Hagiographa; which division beginning with the Psalms, the whole of it (agreeably to the Jewish manner of quoting) is there called by the name of the book with which it commences. Saint Peter also, when appealing to prophecies in proof of the Gospel, says—“All the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days,” (Acts iii. 24). In which passage the apostle plainly includes the books of Samuel in the class of prophets.

‡ Contr. Apion, lib. i. § 8.

1. The *Law* (so called, because it contains precepts for the regulation of life and manners) comprized the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, which were originally written in one volume, as all the manuscripts are to this day, which are read in the synagogues. It is not known when the writings of the Jewish legislator were divided into *five* books: but, as the titles of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, are evidently of Greek origin, (for the tradition related by Philo, and adopted by some writers of the Romish church, that they were given by Moses himself, is too idle to deserve refutation), it is not improbable that these titles were prefixed to the several books by the authors of the Alexandrian or Septuagint Greek version.

2. The *Prophets*, which were thus designated, because these books were written by inspired prophetic men, were divided into the *former* and *latter* *, with regard to the time when they respectively flourished: the former prophets contained the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings, the two last being each reckoned as one book; the latter prophets comprized the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and of the twelve minor prophets, whose books were reckoned as one. The reason why Moses is not included among the prophets is, because he so far surpassed all those who came after him, in eminence and dignity, that they were not accounted worthy to be placed on a level with him: and the books of Joshua and Judges are reckoned among the prophetic books, because they are generally supposed to have been written by the prophet Samuel.

3. The *Cetubim* or *Hagiographa*, that is, the Holy Writings, comprehended the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations of Jeremiah, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah (reckoned as one), and the two books of Chronicles, also reckoned as one book. † This third class or division of the Sacred Books, has received its appellation of *Cetubim*, or Holy Writings, because they were not orally delivered, as the law of Moses was; but the Jews affirm that they were composed by men divinely inspired, who, however,

* This distinction, Carpzov thinks, was borrowed from Zech. i. 4.—“Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the *former* prophets have cried.”—Introd. ad Lib. Bibl. Vet. Test. p. 146.

† The Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther, are, in the modern copies of the Jewish Scriptures, placed immediately after the Pentateuch; under the name of the five *Megilloth* or volumes. The book of Ruth holds sometimes the first or second, and sometimes the fifth place.

had no public mission as prophets: and the Jews conceived that they were dictated not by dreams, visions, or voice, or in other ways, as the oracles of the prophets were, but that they were more immediately revealed to the minds of their authors. It is remarkable that Daniel is excluded from the number of prophets, and that his writings, with the rest of the Hagiographa, were not publicly read in the synagogues as the Law and the Prophets were: this is ascribed to the singular minuteness with which he foretold the coming of the Messiah before the destruction of the city and sanctuary (Dan. ix.), and the apprehension of the Jews, lest the public reading of his predictions should lead any to embrace the doctrines of Jesus Christ.*

The Pentateuch is divided into fifty or fifty-four Parasches, or larger sections, according as the Jewish lunar year is simple or intercalary; one of which sections was read in the synagogue every Sabbath-day: this division many of the Jews suppose to have been appointed by Moses, but it is by others attributed, and with greater probability, to Ezra. These parasches were further subdivided into smaller sections termed *Siderim*, or orders. Until the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Jews read only the Law; but the reading of it being then prohibited, they substituted for it fifty-four *Haph-taras*, or sections from the prophets. Subsequently, however, when the reading of the Law was restored by the Maccabees, the section which had been read from the Law was used for the first, and that from the Prophets, for the second lesson†. These sections were also divided into *Pesukim*, or verses, which are likewise ascribed to Ezra; and, if not contrived by him, it is certain that this subdivision was introduced shortly after his death: it was probably intended for the use of the Targumists or Chaldee interpreters. After the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, when the Hebrew language had ceased to be spoken, and the Chaldee became the

* Hottinger's Thesaurus, p. 510. Leusden's Philologus Hebræus, Diss. ii. pp. 13—22. Bishop Cosins's Scholastical Hist. of the Canon, c. ii. pp. 10, *et seq.*

† Of these divisions, we have evident traces in the New Testament: thus, the section (περίοχη) of the prophet Isaiah, which the Ethiopian eunuch was reading, was, in all probability, that which related to the sufferings of the Messiah, (Acts viii. 32.) When Saint Paul entered into the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, he stood up to preach *after the reading of the Law and the Prophets*, (Acts xiii. 15), that is, after reading the first lesson out of the Law, and the second lesson out of the Prophets. And, in the very discourse which he then delivered, he tells the Jews, that *the Prophets were read at Jerusalem on every Sabbath-day*, that is, in those lessons which were taken out of the Prophets, (Acts xiii. 27.)

vernacular tongue, it was (as we have already remarked*), usual to read the law, first in the original Hebrew, and afterwards to interpret it to the people in the Chaldee dialect. For the purpose of exposition, therefore, these shorter periods were very convenient.†

The divisions of the Old Testament, which now generally obtain, are four in number: namely, 1. The *Pentateuch*, or five books of Moses;—2. The *Historical Books*, comprising Joshua to Esther inclusive;—3. The *Doctrinal* or *Poetical Books* of Job, Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon;—and, 4. The *Prophetic Books* of Isaiah, Jeremiah with his Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Twelve Minor Prophets. These are severally divided into chapters and verses, to facilitate reference, and not primarily with a view to any natural division of the multifarious subjects which they embrace: but by whom these divisions were originally made, is a question, concerning which there exists a considerable difference of opinion.

That it is comparatively a modern invention, is evident from its being utterly unknown to the antient Christians, whose Greek Bibles, indeed, had then Τίτλοι and Κεφαλαία (*titles* and *heads*); but the intent of these was, rather to point out the *sum* or contents of the text, than to divide the various books. They also differed greatly from the present chapters, many of them containing only a few verses, and some of them not more than one. The invention of chapters has by some been ascribed to Lanfranc, who was archbishop of Canterbury in the reigns of William the Conqueror and William II.; while others attribute it to Stephen Langton, who was archbishop of the same see in the reigns of John and Henry III. But the real author of this very useful division was Cardinal Hugo de Sancto Caro, who flourished about the middle of the 13th century, and wrote a celebrated commentary on the Scriptures. Having projected a concordance to the Latin Vulgate version, by which any passage might be found, he divided both the Old and New Testaments into chapters, which are the same we now have: these chapters he subdivided into smaller portions, which he distinguished by the letters A, B, C, D, E, F, and G, which are placed in the margin at equal distances from each other, according to the

* See vol. i. pp. 226, 227.

† Buxtorf, Tiberias, c. 11. Leusden (Philol. Heb. p. 37.) has given a table of the fifty-four *Parasches* or sections of the Law, with their Hebrew appellations, showing the portions corresponding with our modern division of chapters and verses.

length of the chapters. * The facility of reference thus afforded by Hugo's divisions, having become known to Rabbi Mordecai Nathan, (or Isaac Nathan, as he is sometimes called), a celebrated Jewish teacher in the fifteenth century, he undertook a similar concordance for the Hebrew Scriptures; and improved upon the cardinal's invention, by substituting, for the letters of the alphabet, still smaller divisions, which he distinguished by numbers: and these constitute the present verses of the Old Testament, having, for the convenience of reference, been universally adopted from the year 1445 (when Rabbi Nathan finished his concordance) to the present time. † As, however, these divisions and subdivisions are not always made with the strictest regard to the connexion of parts, it is greatly to be wished that all future editions of the Scriptures might be printed after the judicious manner adopted by Mr. Reeves in his equally beautiful and correct editions of the entire Bible; in which the numbers of the verses and chapters are thrown into the margin, and the metrical parts of Scripture are distinguished from the rest by being printed in verses in the usual manner.

VI. "The Holy Scriptures being the foundation of the Christian religion, upon which Christians built the whole system of their doctrine, and which they were obliged to read both in public and in private; the several churches of the world could not long be without such translations as might be understood by every person." ‡ We find, therefore, that versions of the Bible, entire or partial, were coeval with the promulgation of the Gospel throughout the nations of the world: of those ancient versions, which are of importance in the criticism and interpretation of the sacred volume, some account has been already given; || it only remains to offer a brief notice of the venerable translation now in use in the English language, as well as of those translations by which it was more immediately preceded.

The earliest English Bible was executed by an unknown individual, which Archbishop Usher places to the year 1290:

* These divisions of Cardinal Hugo may be seen in any of the older editions of the Vulgate, and in the earlier English translations of the Bible, which were made from that version, particularly in that usually called *Taverner's Bible*, folio, London, 1539.

† Buxtorf, *Præf. ad Concordant. Bibliorum Hebræorum*. Prideaux's *Connexion*, vol. i. pp. 332—342. Carpzov, *Introd. ad Libros Biblicos Vet. Test.* pp. 27, 28. Leusden, *Philol. Hebr. Diss.* iii. pp. 23—31.

‡ Theodoret, *ad Græc. Infid. Serm.* 5. cited in Johnson's "Historical Account of the several English Translations of the Bible." (Bishop Watson's *Coll. of Theol. Tracts*, vol. iii. p. 61).

|| See vol. i. pp. 254—311.

of this there are three manuscript copies preserved in the Bodleian library, and in the libraries of Christ's Church and Queen's Colleges at Oxford. Towards the close of the following century, John de Trevisa, vicar of Berkeley in Cornwall, at the desire of his patron Lord Berkeley, translated the Old and New Testaments into the English tongue; but no part of this work appears ever to have been printed, though several copies are known to exist in manuscript. Nearly contemporary with him was the celebrated John Wickliffe, who, about the year 1380, translated the entire Bible from the Latin Vulgate: the New Testament of Wickliffe was published in folio by Mr. Lewis in 1731; and was handsomely re-edited in quarto, in 1810, by the Rev. Henry Hervey Baber, one of the librarians of the British Museum, who prefixed a valuable memoir of this "Apostle of England," as Wickliffe has sometimes been called.

The first *printed* edition of any part of the Scriptures in English was of the New Testament, at Hamburgh, in the year 1526. It was translated by William Tindale or Tyn-dale, with the assistance of John Fry and William Ray: the whole of this impression (with the exception, it is said, of a single copy) being bought up and burnt by Tonstal Bishop of London, and Sir Thomas More, Tindal put forth a new edition in 1527, and a third in 1528; and, two years after, his translation of the Pentateuch appeared at Hamburgh, with another edition of his Testament.* In 1535 was published the translation of Miles Coverdale †, great part of which was Tyndale's; and two years after, John Rogers, martyr, (who had assisted Tyndale in his biblical labours), edited a Bible, probably at Hamburgh, under the assumed name of Thomas Matthews, whence it is generally known by the name of Matthews's Bible ‡. A revised edition of this translation, corrected by Cranmer and Coverdale, was printed at London in 1539 §, by Grafton and Whitchurch, in large folio, and from its size is usually denominated the GREAT BIBLE. No new version was executed during the reign of Edward VI.; though several editions were printed both of the Old and New Testaments.

* In 1536 Tyndale was put to death, for heresy, at Villefort, near Brussels, being first strangled, and his body afterwards reduced to ashes.

† This version is of extreme rarity. See a bibliographical account of it in Mr. Dibdin's *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*, vol. i. pp. 78—81.

‡ See an account of this impression in his edition of *Ames's Typographical Antiquities*, vol. iii. pp. 434—436.

§ See an interesting account of this impression in the same work, pp. 438—440.

During the sanguinary reign of Queen Mary, Miles Coverdale, John Knox, Christopher Goodman, and other English exiles, who had taken refuge at Geneva, published a new translation between the years 1557 and 1560, with short annotations, inculcating the doctrines espoused by Calvin. The New Testament of this edition was the first in English, which was divided into verses. The Geneva Bible was highly esteemed by the Puritans, and, in the course of little more than thirty years afterwards, not fewer than thirty editions of it were printed in various sizes, principally by the royal printers. This translation is allowed to possess considerable merit, for its general fidelity and perspicuity. Eight years after the completion of the Geneva Bible, a new version was published, with two prefaces, by Archbishop Parker, now generally termed the *Bishops' Bible*, from the circumstance of eight of the translators being bishops: although this translation was read in the churches, the Geneva Bible was generally preferred in families *.

At length, in the reign of James I., several objections having been made to the Bishops' Bible at the conference held at Hampton Court in 1603, the king in the following year gave orders for the undertaking of a new version, and fifty-four learned men were appointed to this important labour: but, before it was commenced, seven of the persons nominated were either dead, or had declined the task; for the list, as given as by Fuller †, comprizes only forty-seven names. These, being ranged under six divisions, entered upon their work in 1607, and completed it in 1610; it was then revised by a committee of six of the translators, and finally reviewed by Bishop Bilson and Doctor Smith; the latter prefixed the arguments, and wrote the preface ‡. This translation, generally known by the name of King James's Bible, was first printed in 1611, and is

* In 1582 the Catholics published an English Translation of the New Testament at Rheims, and of the Old Testament at Douay, in 1609—10: it was crowded with foreign and barbarous terms, calculated to perplex, rather than to diffuse the light of truth. For a more particular account of these translations from the Latin Vulgate, which the laity were not allowed to peruse but under certain restrictions, see Bishop Marsh's *Comparison of the Churches of England and Rome*, pp. 85—87. And for a review of the dangerous tenets of the Rhemish Bible, see the *British Critic* for September 1817, vol. viii. (N. S.) pp. 296, *et seq.*

† Church History, book x. pp. 44—47.

‡ Johnson's Historical Account, whence the preceding notice is abridged. The reader, who is desirous of perusing a complete account of English Biblical Translations, is referred to Archbishop Newcome's "Historical View," or Mr. Lewis's History, prefixed to his folio edition of Wickliffe's New Testament, and which is also extant in 8vo, with considerable additions.

that now universally adopted wherever the English language is poken. The edition, generally reputed to be the most correct, is that of Oxford, in quarto and folio, 1769, printed under the superintendence of the late Rev. Dr. Blayney: the text was carefully collated with several correct editions, and the punctuation amended; the summaries of chapters and running titles at the top of each page were also corrected, and 30,495 new references were inserted in the margin *. From the singular pains bestowed, in order to render this edition as accurate as possible, it has hitherto been considered *the standard edition*, from which all subsequent impressions have been executed. Notwithstanding, however, the great labour and attention bestowed by Dr. Blayney, his edition must now yield the palm of accuracy to the very beautiful and correct edition published by Messrs. Eyre and Strahan, His Majesty's Printers, but printed by Mr. Woodfall in 1806, and again in 1812 in quarto; as not fewer than one hundred and sixteen errors were discovered in collating the edition of 1806 with Dr. B.'s, and one of these errors was an omission of considerable importance †. Messrs. Eyre and Strahan's editions may therefore be regarded as approaching as near as possible to what bibliographers term an *immaculate text* ‡.

* A full account of Dr. Blayney's Collation and Revision was communicated by him to the Gentleman's Magazine for November 1769, vol. xxxix. pp. 517—519.

† In Dr. Blayney's edition of 1769, the following words are omitted in Rev. xviii. 22. after the words "no more," viz. "at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more."

‡ Only *one* erratum, we believe, has been discovered in the edition of 1806. The following particulars relative to the above-mentioned London editions of the Bible may not be unacceptable to the bibliographical reader, at the same time they will show that their claims to be considered as standard editions are not altogether unfounded.—The booksellers of the metropolis, having applied to His Majesty's Printers to undertake a handsome edition of the Bible, confided the execution of it to Mr. George Woodfall in 1804. The copy printed from was the current Cambridge edition, with which Mr. W.'s edition agrees page for page. It was afterwards read twice by the Oxford impression then in use, and the proofs were transmitted to the Rev. Lancelot Sharpe, by whom they were read with Dr. Blayney's 4to edition of 1769. After the proofs returned by Mr. S. for press had been corrected, the forms were placed upon the press at which they were to be worked, and another proof was taken. This was read by Mr. Woodfall's superintendant, and afterwards by Mr. W. himself, with Dr. Blayney's edition, and any errors that had previously escaped were corrected; the forms not having been removed from the press after the last proofs had been taken off. By this precaution, they avoided the danger of errors (a danger of very frequent occurrence, and of no small magnitude), arising from the removal of the forms from the proof press to the presses on which the sheets were finally worked off. Of this edition, which was ready for publication in 1806, five hundred copies were printed on imperial 4to, two hundred on royal, and three thousand on medium quarto size. In the course of printing this edition from the Cambridge copy, a great number of very gross errors were discovered in the latter, and the errors in the common Oxford editions above noticed were not so few as 1200! The London edition of 1806 being exhausted, a new impression was put to press in 1810, and was completed, with equal beauty and accuracy, in 1812.

Of all the modern versions now extant, the present authorized English translation is allowed by those who are competent judges to be the most exact: "its style is incomparably superior to any thing which might be expected from the finical and perverted taste of our own age. It is simple; it is harmonious, it is energetic; and, which is of no small importance, use has made it familiar, and time has rendered it sacred." *

* Bishop Middleton on the Greek article, p. 328.

CHAPTER II.

ANALYSIS OF THE PENTATEUCH, OR FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES.

SECTION I.

ON THE PENTATEUCH.

- I. *Title* ; — II. *Proofs of the authenticity of the Pentateuch* ; —
 1. *From the language in which it is written* ; — 2. *From the nature of the Mosaic law* ; — 3. *From the united testimony of Jews, Gentiles, and Christians* ; — 4. *Internal evidences* ; — III. *Objections to the authenticity of the Pentateuch considered and refuted* ; —
 IV. *Argument of, and observations on, the Pentateuch.*

I. **THE** Pentateuch, by which title the five first books of Moses are distinguished, is a word of Greek original *, which literally signifies the five instruments or books ; by the Jews it is termed Chometz, a word synonymous with Pentateuch, and also, more generally, the LAW, or the LAW OF MOSES, because it contains the ecclesiastical and political ordinances issued by God to the Israelites. The Pentateuch forms, to this day, but one roll or volume in the Jewish manuscripts, being divided only into parasches and siderim, or larger and smaller sections †. This collective designation of the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, is of very considerable antiquity, though we have no certain information when it was first introduced. As, however, the names of these books are evidently derived from the Greek, and as the five books of Moses are expressly mentioned by Josephus ‡, who wrote only a few years after our Saviour's ascension, we have every reason to believe that the appellation of Pentateuch was prefixed to the Septuagint version by the Alexandrian translators.

* Πεντατευχος, from πέντε, five, and τευχος, a book or volume.

† For an account of these divisions, see p. 10. of this volume.

‡ In his Jewish Antiquities, Josephus terms the Pentateuch the "*Holy Books of Moses*," lib. x. c. iv. § 2.) and in his Treatise against Appion, (lib. i. c. viii.) when enumerating the sacred writings of the Jews, he says, that "*FIVE of them belong to Moses*."—It is not certain that this distinction of the Pentateuch into five separate books was not known to and recognized by Saint Paul, (1 Cor. xiv. 19.) by the term *five words*. Jerome was of opinion that the apostle expressly alluded to them. Epist. ad Paulinum.

II. That the Pentateuch was written by the great legislator of the Hebrews, by whom it was addressed to his contemporaries, and consequently was not, nor could be, the production of later times, we are authorized to affirm, from a series of testimonies, which, whether we consider them together or separately, form such a body of evidence, as can be adduced for the productions of no antient profane writers whatever.

1. "It is an undeniable fact, that Hebrew ceased to be the living language of the Jews during the Babylonish captivity, and that the Jewish productions after that period were in general either Chaldee or Greek. The Jews of Palestine, some ages before the appearance of our Saviour, were unable to comprehend the Hebrew original, without the assistance of a Chaldee paraphrase; and it was necessary to undertake a Greek translation, because that language alone was known to the Jews of Alexandria. It necessarily follows, therefore, that every book, which is written in pure Hebrew, was composed either before or about the time of the Babylonish captivity*. This being admitted, we may advance a step further, and contend, that the period which elapsed between the composition of the most antient and the most modern book of the Old Testament was very considerable; or, in other words, that the most antient books of the Old Testament were written a length of ages prior to the Babylonish captivity. No language continues during many centuries in the same state of cultivation, and the Hebrew, like other tongues, passed through the several stages of infancy, youth, manhood, and old age. If, therefore, on comparison, the several parts of the Hebrew Bible are found to differ, not only in regard to style, but also in regard to character and cultivation of language; if the one discovers the golden, another the silver, a third a brazen, a fourth the iron age, we have strong internal marks of their having been composed at different and distant periods. No classical scholar, independently of the Grecian history, would believe that the poems ascribed to Homer were written in the age of Demosthenes, the orations of Demosthenes in the time of Origen, or the commentaries of Origen in the days of Lascaris and Chrysoloras. For the very same reason it is certain that the five books, which are ascribed to Moses, were not written in the time of David, the psalms of David in the age of Isaiah, nor

* See Doederlein *Institutio Theologi Christiani*, § 38 tom. i. p. 105. editio 4ta. Norimbergæ, 1778.

the prophecies of Isaiah in the time of Malachi. But it appears from what has been said above, in regard to the extinction of the Hebrew language, that the book of Malachi could not have been written much later than the Babylonish captivity; before that period, therefore, were written the prophecies of Isaiah, still earlier the psalms of David, and much earlier than these the books which are ascribed to Moses. There is no presumption therefore whatsoever, a priori, that Moses was not the author or compiler of the Pentateuch.*

2. But further, the five books of Moses contain "a system of ceremonial and moral laws; which, unless we reject the authority of all history, were observed by the Israelites from the time of their departure out of Egypt, till their dispersion at the taking of Jerusalem. These *laws* therefore are as ancient as the conquest of Palestine. It is also an undeniable historical fact, that the Jews in every age believed their ancestors had received them from the hands of Moses, and that these laws were the basis of their political and religious institutions, as long as they continued to be a people. We are reduced therefore to this dilemma, to acknowledge, either that these laws were actually delivered by Moses, or that a whole nation, during fifteen hundred years, groaned under the weight of an imposture, without once detecting or even suspecting the fraud. The Athenians believed that the system of laws, by which they were governed, was composed by Solon, and the Spartans attributed their code to Lycurgus, without ever being suspected of a mistake in their belief. Why then should it be doubted, that the rules prescribed in the Pentateuch were given by Moses? To deny it, is to assert that an effect may exist without a cause, or that a great and important revolution may take place without an agent. We have therefore an argument, little short of mathematical demonstration, that the *substance* of the Pentateuch proceeded from Moses; and that the very *words* were written by him, though not so mathematically demonstrable as the former, is at least a moral certainty. The Jews, whose evidence alone can decide in the present instance, have believed it from the earliest to the present age: no other person ever aspired to be thought the author, and we may venture to affirm that no other person could have been the author. For it is wholly incredible that the Jews, though weak and superstitious, would have received in a later age a set of writings as the genuine work of Moses, if no

* Bishop Marsh's *Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated*, pp. 6, 7.

history, and no tradition, had preserved the remembrance of his having been the author." *

3. Although the spirit of antient simplicity which breathes throughout these books, renders it improbable that they were fabricated in a later age; yet, when we add to this the universal consent of those persons who were most concerned, and best able, to ascertain the truth of the point in question, we have an additional testimony in favour of the genuineness and authenticity of the Pentateuch. If we believe other nations, when they attest the antiquity, and specify the authors of their laws, no just reason can be assigned why we should not give equal credit to the Jews, whose testimony is surely as much deserving of credit as that of the Athenians, the Lacedemonians, the Romans, and the Persians, concerning Solon, Lycurgus, Numa, and Zoroaster †: or, rather, from the facts we shall proceed to state, they are better entitled to belief than any other nation under heaven. "Every book of the Old Testament implies the previous existence of the Pentateuch: in many of them it is expressly mentioned, allusion is made to it in some, and it is quoted in others. These contain a series of external evidence in its favour, which is hardly to be confuted; and when the several links of this argument are put together, they will form a chain, which it would require more than ordinary abilities to break. In the first place, no one will deny that the Pentateuch existed in the time of Christ and his apostles, for they not only mention it, but quote it ‡. 'This we admit,' reply the advocates for the hypothesis, which it is the object of this discourse to confute, 'but you cannot therefore conclude that Moses was the author, for there is reason to believe that it was composed by Ezra.' Now, unfortunately for men of this persuasion, Ezra himself is evidence against them; for, instead of assuming to himself the honour which they so liberally confer on him, he expressly ascribes the book of the law to Moses: 'and they set the priests in their divisions, and the

* Bishop Marsh's *Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated*, pp. 7, 8. See also Bishop Gleig's edition of Stackhouse's *History of the Bible*, vol. i. pp. xiv—xix. The following articles of the Jewish Confession of Faith sufficiently attest how firmly the Jews believe the Pentateuch to be the work of Moses.

7. I firmly believe, that all the prophecies of Moses our master (God rest his soul in peace) are true; and that he is the father of all the sages, whether they went before or came after him.

8. *I firmly believe, that the law, which we have now in our hands, was given by Moses; God rest his soul in peace!*—Lamy's *Apparatus Biblicus*, vol. i. pp. 245, 246.

† Stillingfleet's *Origines Sacrae*, lib. ii. c. 1. § vi. vii.

‡ Matt. v. 27. Mark x. 3. xii. 26. Luke x. 25. xxiv. 44. John vii. 19. viii. 5. Acts xxviii. 23. 1 Cor. ix. 9. 2 Cor. iii. 15.

Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is in Jerusalem, as it is written in *the book of Moses**? Secondly, the Pentateuch existed not only before the time of Ezra, but before the division of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. For it was not only accepted as genuine by the Samaritans, as well as by the Jews, but was equally, in both nations, the basis of their civil and religious institutions†. It must have been written therefore before the division of the kingdoms had taken place: for if it had been forged in a later age among the Jews, the perpetual enmity, that subsisted between the two nations, would have utterly prevented its being adopted by the Samaritans: and had it been a spurious production of the Samaritans, it would never have been received among the Jews. There remains therefore only one resource to those, who contend that Moses was not the author, namely, that it was written in the period which elapsed between the age of Joshua and that of Solomon. But the whole Jewish history, from the time of their settlement in Canaan to the building of the temple in Jerusalem, presupposes that the book of the law was written by Moses. It is described as such in the Chronicles, the Kings, and especially in Joshua‡; in which last book in particular there is a passage which sufficiently proves that the Pentateuch, or, as the Jews termed it, the Book of the Law, existed in the time of Joshua: ‘Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do all according to the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee,—this *book of the law* shall not depart out of thy mouth,’ (Josh. i. 7, 8.)” §

In addition, however, to the native testimony of the Jews respecting the genuineness and authenticity of the Pentateuch, we have the undisputed evidence of Pagan and of Christian antiquity. Porphyry, one of the most acute and learned enemies of Christianity, admitted the genuineness of the Pentateuch, and acknowledged that Moses was prior to the Phœnician

* Ezra vi. 8. See also Ezra iii. 2. and Nehemiah xiii. 1.

† It is true that the ten tribes, as well as those of Judah and Benjamin, were addicted to idolatry, but it appears from 2 Kings iii. 2. x. 21—28. xvii. 28. 2 Chron. xxxv. 18. that they considered the religion of Jehovah as the only true religion.

‡ 2 Chron. xxiii. 18. xxv. 4. 1 Kings ii. 3. 2 Kings xiv. 6. Josh. i. 7, 8. viii. 31. xxiii. 6.

§ The Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated, pp. 9, 10. The very numerous texts, in which the Pentateuch is cited by the sacred writers *subsequent* to Moses, are given at length by Huet, Dem. Evang. lib. i. prop. iv. cap. i. (tom. i. pp. 68—73.); Bishop Tomline, Elem. of Christ. Theol. vol. i. pp. 34—37; Dr. Graves, Lectures on Pentateuch, vol. i. pp. 19—34.; Jahn, Introd. ad Vet. Fœd. pp. 209—214. 221—224.

Sanchoniathon, who lived before the Trojan war. He even contended for the truth of Sanchoniathon's account of the Jews, from its coincidence with the Mosaic history. Nor was the genuineness of the Pentateuch denied by any of the numerous writers against the Gospel during the first four centuries of the Christian æra, although the fathers constantly appealed to the history and prophecies of the Old Testament in support of the divine origin of the doctrines which they taught. The power of historical truth compelled the emperor Julian, whose favour to the Jews appears to have proceeded solely from his hostility to the Christians, to acknowledge that persons instructed by the Spirit of God once lived among the Israelites; and to confess that the books which bore the name of Moses were genuine, and that the facts they contained were worthy of credit. Even Mohammed maintained the inspiration of Moses, and revered the sanctity of the Jewish laws. Manetho, Berosus, and many others, give accounts confirming and according with the Mosaic history. The Egyptian, Phœnician, Greek, and Roman authors, concur in relating the traditions respecting the creation, the fall of man, the deluge, and the dispersion of mankind *: and the lately acquired knowledge of the Sanscrit language, by opening the treasures of the eastern world, has confirmed all these traditions as concurring with the narrative in the sacred history. †

“To the preceding demonstration perhaps the following objection will be made, ‘We will admit the force of your arguments, and grant that Moses actually wrote a work called the Book of the Law: but how can we be certain that it was the very work which is now current under his name? And unless you can show this to be at least probable, your whole evidence is of no value.’ To illustrate the force or weakness of this objection, let us apply it to some antient Greek author, and see whether a classical scholar would allow it to be of weight. ‘It is true that the Greek writers speak of Homer, as an antient and celebrated poet; it is true also that they have quoted from the works, which they ascribe to him, various passages that we find at present in the Iliad and Odyssey: yet still

* Grotius and his annotator Le Clerc have collected the various passages of the writers above cited. *De Veritate*, lib. i. c. 16. *in notis*.

† The Discourses of Sir William Jones, delivered to the Asiatic Society at Calcutta, and printed in the three first volumes of their Researches, the Indian Antiquities, and History of India by Mr. Maurice, may be referred to as containing incontestable evidence of the antiquity and genuineness of the Mosaic records. Mr. Canvithen has very ably condensed all the information to be derived from these voluminous works, in his Bampton Lectures for the year 1809, particularly in the first five discourses.

there is a possibility that the poems which were written by Homer, and those which we call the Iliad and Odyssey, were totally distinct productions.' Now an advocate for Greek literature would reply to this objection, not with a serious answer, but with a smile of contempt; and he would think it beneath his dignity to silence an opponent, who appeared to be deaf to the clearest conviction. But still more may be said in defence of Moses than in defence of Homer; for the writings of the latter were not deposited in any temple, or sacred archive, in order to secure them from the devastations of time, whereas the copy of the book of the law, as written by Moses, was intrusted to the priests and the elders, preserved in the ark of the covenant, and read to the people every seventh year *. Sufficient care therefore was taken, not only for the preservation of the original record, but that no spurious production should be substituted in its stead. And that no spurious production ever has been substituted in the stead of the original composition of Moses, appears from the evidence both of the Greek and the Samaritan Pentateuch. For as these agree with the Hebrew, except in some trifling variations †, to which every work is exposed by length of time, it is absolutely certain that the five books, which we now ascribe to Moses, are one and the same work with that which was translated into Greek in the time of the Ptolemies, and, what is of still greater importance, with that which existed in the time of Solomon ‡. And as the Jews could have had no motive whatsoever, during the period which elapsed between the age of Joshua and that of Solomon, for substituting a spurious production instead of the original as written by Moses; and, even had they been inclined to attempt the imposture, would have been prevented by the care which had been taken by their

* And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the years of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God. Deut. xxxi. 9—11. 24—26. There is a passage to the same purpose in Josephus: *Δηλεται δια των ανακειμενων εν τω ιερω γραμματαυ.* Josephi Antiquitat. lib. v. c. i. § 17. tom. i. p. 185. ed. Hudson.

† See the collation of the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuch, in the sixth volume of the London Polyglott, p. 19. of the *Animadversiones Samariticæ*.

‡ See Waltoni Prolegom. xi. § 11.

lawgiver, we must conclude that our present Pentateuch is the identical work that was delivered by Moses.

4. But, "beside the external evidence which has been produced in favour of the books in question, equally convincing arguments may be drawn from their contents and language. The very mode of writing in the four last books discovers an author contemporary with the events which he relates; every description, both religious and political, is a proof that the writer was present at each respective scene; and the legislative and historical parts are so interwoven with each other, that neither of them could have been written by a man who lived in a later age. The account which is given in the book of Exodus of the conduct of Pharaoh towards the children of Israel is such, as might be expected from a writer, who was not only acquainted with the country at large, but had frequent access to the court of its sovereign: and the minute geographical description of the passage through Arabia is such, as could have been given only by a man like Moses, who had spent forty years in the land of Midian. The language itself is a proof of its high antiquity, which appears partly from the great simplicity of the style, and partly from the use of Archaisms, or antiquated expressions, which in the days even of David and Solomon were obsolete*. But the strongest argument that can be produced to show that the Pentateuch was written by a man born and educated in Egypt, is the use of Egyptian words†, which never were nor ever could have been used by a native of Palestine; and it is a remarkable circumstance, that the very same thing which Moses had expressed by a word that is pure Egyptian, Isaiah, as might be expected from his birth and education, has expressed by a word that is purely Hebrew."‡

III. We here close the *positive* evidence for the authenticity of the Pentateuch; it only remains, therefore, that we notice and refute the arguments deduced from marks of a supposed posterior date, or at least of posterior interpolation, which have been so often urged with the insidious design of weakening the authority of the Pentateuch.

* For instance אִלֵּ, ille, and נֶעֱר, puer, which are used in both genders by no other writer than Moses. See Gen. xxiv. 14. 16. 28. 55. 57. xxxviii. 21. 25.

† For instance אֲחִי, (perhaps written originally אֲחִי, and the י lengthened into אֲ by mistake) written by the LXX αχί or αχίς, Gen. xli. 2. and תִּבְרָה, written by the LXX Σίβη or Σίβης. See La Croze Lexicon Egyptiacum, art. AXI and ΘΗΒΙ.

‡ The same thing which Moses expresses by אֲחִי, (Gen. xli. 2.) Isaiah (xix. 7.) expresses by עֲרֹת, for the LXX have translated both of these words by αχί.—The Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated, pp. 11—14.

All these objections, it is observed by the learned prelate to whose labours this section is so deeply indebted, may be comprised under one general head—namely, “expressions and passages are found in the Pentateuch which could not have been written by Moses.” The trite objection, drawn from the last chapter of Deuteronomy, where an account is given of the death of Moses, is of no importance whatever, and is rejected as trivial even by those who contend that the Pentateuch is spurious. The thirty-third chapter of Deuteronomy has evident marks of being the close of the work, as finished by Moses, and the thirty-fourth was added, either by Joshua or some other sacred writer, as a supplement to the whole. But there are names of cities mentioned in the Pentateuch, which names were not given to those cities till after the death of Moses. For instance, a city which was originally called Laish, but changed its name to that of Dan, after the Israelites had conquered Palestine, (Judg. xviii. 22.) is yet denominated Dan in the book of Genesis, (xiv. 4.) The book itself therefore, it is said, must have been written after the Israelites had taken possession of the Holy Land. But is it not possible that Moses originally wrote Laish, and that, after the name of the city had been changed, transcribers, for the sake of perspicuity, substituted the new for the old name? This might so easily have happened, that the solution is hardly to be disputed, in a case where the positive arguments in favour of the work in question are so very decisive*. Another objection is taken from the following passage in the book of Genesis, (xxxv. 21.) “and Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.” Now Edar was the name of a tower over one of the gates of Jerusalem; the author of the book of Genesis therefore, it is said, must have been at least a contemporary of Saul and David. But this objection involves a manifest absurdity, for if the writer of this passage had meant the tower of Edar in Jerusalem, he would have made Israel spread his tent beyond a tower that probably did not exist till many hundred years after his death. The tower of Edar signifies literally the tower of the flocks; and as this name was undoubtedly given to many towers, or places of retreat for shepherds in the open country of Palestine, which in the days of the patriarchs was covered with flocks, it is unnecessary to sup-

* An example of the same kind is “Hebron,” (Gen. xiii. 18.) which before the conquest of Palestine was called Kirjath-Arba, as appears from Josh. xiv. 15. This example may be explained in the same manner as the preceding.

pose that it meant in particular a tower of Jerusalem. But the most formidable objection is that which is drawn from the two following passages, the one in the book of Genesis, (xxxvi. 31.) the other in the book of Deuteronomy, (iii. 14.) “These are the kings, that reigned over the land of Edom, *before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.*” And again, “Jair, the son of Manasseh, took all the country of Argob unto the coasts of Geshuri, and Maacathi, and called them after his own name Bashon-havoth-jair, *unto this day.*” Now it is certain that the last clause in each of these examples could not have been written by Moses; for the one implies a writer who lived after the establishment of monarchy in Israel, the other, a writer who lived at least some ages after the settlement of the Jews in Palestine *. But if these clauses themselves are spurious, that is, if they were not written by the author of the Pentateuch, but inserted by some transcriber in a later age, they affect not the authenticity of the work itself. And whoever impartially examines the contents of these two passages, will find that the clauses in question are not only unnecessary, but even a burden to the sense. The clause of the second example in particular could not possibly have proceeded from the author of the rest of the verse, who, whether Moses or any other person, would hardly have written, “He called them after his own name *unto this day.*” The author of the Pentateuch wrote, “he called them after his own name;” some centuries after the death of the author, the clause “unto this day” was probably added in the margin, to denote that the district still retained the name which was given it by Jair, and this marginal reading was in subsequent transcripts obtruded on the text. Whoever doubts the truth of this assertion, needs only to have recourse to the manuscripts of the Greek Testament, and he will find that the spurious additions in the texts of some manuscripts are actually written in the margin of others †.

“The genuine text of the Pentateuch therefore proceeded from the hands of Moses; and the various charges that have

* Witsius, in his *Miscellanea Sacra*, p. 125. says, the clause “before there reigned any king over the children of Israel,” might have been written by Moses, but he cuts the knot, instead of untying it.

† To mention only two examples. The common reading of 1 Cor. xvi. 2. is *μὴν σαββατων*, but the Codex Petavianus 3. has *την κυριακην* in the margin, and in one of the manuscripts used by Beza, this marginal addition had been obtruded on the text. See his note to this passage. Another instance is 1 John ii. 27. where the genuine reading is *χρῖσμα*, but Wetstein quotes two manuscripts in which *πνευμα* is written in the margin, and this marginal reading has found its way not only into the Codex Covelli 2. but into the Coptic and Æthiopic versions.

been brought against it amount to nothing more than this, that it has not descended to the present age without some few alterations; a circumstance at which we ought not to be surprised, when we reflect on the many thousands of transcripts that have been made from it in the course of three thousand years." *—The authority of the Pentateuch being thus established, that of the other books of the Old Testament follows of course: for so great is their mutual and immediate dependence upon each other, that if one be taken away, the authority of the other must necessarily fall.

IV. This division of the sacred volume comprises an account of the creation of the world, and of the fall of man, the outlines of the early annals of the world, and a full recital of the Jewish law, and of the events which happened to the Israelites from their becoming a distinct people to their departure out of Egypt, and their arrival on the confines of the land of Canaan—a period of two thousand five hundred and fifteen years, according to the vulgar computation, or of three thousand seven hundred and sixty-five years, according to the computation established by Dr. Hales. "It is a wide description, gradually contracted; an account of one nation, preceded by a general sketch of the first state of mankind. The books are written in pure Hebrew, with an admirable diversity of style, always well adapted to the subject, yet characterized with the stamp of the same author; they are all evidently parts of the same work, and mutually strengthen and illustrate each other. They blend revolution and history in one point of view; furnish laws, and describe their execution; exhibit prophecies, and relate their accomplishment." †

Besides the Pentateuch, the Jews ascribe to Moses eleven psalms, from psalm xc. to c. There is however no solid evidence to prove that these psalms were composed by him; for the title of the ninetieth psalm ("*a prayer of Moses the man of God*"), which they pretend must be applied also to the ten following psalms, is not sufficient. The greater part of the titles of the psalms is not original, nor indeed very antient;

* Bishop Marsh's *Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated*, pp. 15, 18. The texts above considered, together with many others which were excepted against by Spinoza, Le Clerc (who subsequently wrote a dissertation to refute his former objections) and the late Dr. Geddes, are considered, discussed, and satisfactorily explained at great length by Huet, *Dem. Evang. prop. iv. cap. 14.* (tom. i. p. 254—264), and by Dr. Graves in the appendix to his *Lectures on the four last books of the Pentateuch*, vol. i. pp. 332—361. See also Carpzov, *Introd. ad Libros Biblicos Vet. Test.* pp. 38—41. Moldenhawer, *Introd. ad Libros Canonicos Vet. et Nov. Test.* pp. 16, 17.

† Dr. Gray's *Key*, p. 76.

and some of them are evidently misplaced: we find also in these psalms the names of persons and other marks, which by no means agree with Moses.

Further, some of the antient fathers have thought that Moses was the author of the book of Job: Origen, in his commentary on Job, pretends that Moses translated it out of Syriac into Hebrew: but this opinion is rejected both by Jews and Christians. Besides, if this book had really been composed by Moses, is it likely that the Jews would have separated it from the Pentateuch? *

There are likewise ascribed to Moses several apocryphal books; as an apocalypse, or Little Genesis, the ascension of Moses, the assumption of Moses, the testament of Moses, and the mysterious books of Moses. The principal part of the "Little Genesis" was transferred by Cedrenus into his chronological history: † it was extant in Hebrew in the fourth century of the Christian æra, for we find it cited by Jerome; and some version of it should seem also to have been in existence in the sixteenth century, which was condemned as apocryphal by the Council of Trent. From the apocalypse just noticed, it has been pretended that Saint Paul copied Gal. v. 6. and vi. 15: and it has been imagined that what is said in the Epistle of Jude (verse 9), respecting the archangel Michael's contention with Satan for the body of Moses, was taken from the apocryphal ascension of Moses. Such was the opinion of Origen, who, though he cites it in another place, alludes to it as not being in the canon ‡. All these pretended Mosaic writings however are confessedly spurious, and are supposed to have been fabricated in the early ages of Christianity.

On the difference between the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuchs, or rather editions of the Pentateuch, see Vol. I. pp. 175—177, *supra*.

* The book of Job was composed many ages before the time of Moses. See Chap. V. Sect. I. *infra*, of this Book.

† Cedrenus, enumerating the authorities consulted by him, says that he "collected not a few things from the Little Genesis, ἀπο τῆς Λιπτῆς Γενεσεως. Historia Compendiaria, tom i. p. 2. edit. Venet. 1729. Cedrenus frequently cites this apocryphal book in the course of his work.

‡ See the passages of Origen at length in Dr. Lardner's Works, vol. ii. pp. 483—512, 8vo edit.

SECTION II.

ON THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

- I. *Title*; — II. *Author*; — III. *When written*; — IV. *General argument*; — V. *Scope*; — VI. *Synopsis*; — VII. *Vindication of the literal sense of the book of Genesis*.

I. **THE** first book of the Pentateuch, which is called GENESIS (ΓΕΝΕΣΙΣ), derives its appellation from the title it bears in the Greek Septuagint, ΒΙΒΛΟΣ ΓΕΝΕΣΕΩΣ; which signifies the Book of the Generation or Production; because it commences with the history of the generation or production of all things. The Jews name the books of the Old Testament, either from their authors, or the principal subject treated in them, or from the first Hebrew word with which they begin; as the five books of Moses, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Hence the book of Genesis is in Hebrew called בְּרֵאשִׁית, *Bereshith*, “in the beginning,” from its initial word.*

II. That Moses was unquestionably the author of this book, has already been demonstrated in the preceding section. A question, however, has been agitated of late years, whence did he derive materials for a history which commenced so many ages before he was born? To this inquiry a very satisfactory answer may be given in the words of an eminent commentator †: — “There are only three ways in which these important records could have been preserved and brought down to the time of Moses, viz. writing, tradition, and divine revelation. In the antediluvian world, when the life of man was so protracted, there was, comparatively, little need for writing. Tradition answered every purpose to which writing in any kind of characters could be subservient; and the necessity of erecting monuments to perpetuate public events could scarcely have suggested itself; as, during those times, there could be little danger apprehended of any important fact becoming obsolete, its history having to pass through very few hands, and all these friends and relatives in the most proper sense of the terms; for they lived in an insulated state, under a patriarchal government. Thus it was easy for Moses to be satisfied of the truth of all he relates in the book of Genesis, as the accounts came to him through the medium of very few persons. From Adam

* Vatablus, in Crit. Sacr. Heidegger, Enchirid. Bibl. p. 17. Carpzov. Introd. ad Libros Biblicos Vet. Test. p. 55, *et seq.*

† Dr. A. Clarke, Preface to Genesis.

to Noah there was but *one* man necessary to the correct transmission of the history of this period of 1656 years. Now this history was without doubt perfectly known to Methuselah, who lived to see them both. In like manner, Shem connected Noah and Abraham, having lived to converse with both; as Isaac did with Abraham and Joseph, from whom these things might be easily conveyed to Moses by Amram, who was contemporary with Joseph. Supposing, then, all the curious facts recorded in the book of Genesis to have had no other authority than the tradition already referred to, they would stand upon a foundation of credibility superior to any that the most reputable of the antient Greek and Latin historians can boast. Yet to preclude all possibility of mistake, the unerring spirit of God directed Moses in the selection of his facts, and the ascertaining of his dates. Indeed the narrative is so simple; so much like truth; so consistent every where with itself; so correct in its dates; so impartial in its biography; so accurate in its philosophical details; so pure in its morality; and so benevolent in its design, as amply to demonstrate that it never could have had an earthly origin."

Another and equally satisfactory solution of the question, as to the source whence Moses obtained the materials for his history, has been offered of late years by many eminent critics; who are of opinion that Moses consulted monuments or records of former ages, which had descended from the families of the patriarchs, and were in existence at the time he wrote. This opinion was first announced by Calmet*; who, from the genealogical details, the circumstantiality of the relations, the specific numbers of years assigned to the patriarchs, as well as the dates of the facts recorded, concludes that Moses could not have learned the particulars related by him with such minute exactness, but from written documents or memoirs. Of this description, he thinks, was the book of Jasher or of the Upright, which is cited in Josh. x. 13. and 2 Sam. i. 18.; and attributes the differences in names and genealogies, observable in various parts of Scripture, to the number of copies whence these numerations were made. Calmet further considers the notice of a battle fought during the sojourning of the Israelites in Egypt, which occurs in 1 Chron. vii. 20—22, as derived from the same source. The hypothesis of Calmet has been adopted in this country by the learned editor of Stackhouse's History of the Bible†; who,

* Commentaire Litterale, tom. i. part i. p. xiii.

† Bishop Gleig. See his Introduction, vol. i. p. xx.

regarding the current opinion of the late invention of writing as a vulgar error, thinks it probable that the posterity of Shem, and perhaps also of Japheth, kept regular records of all the remarkable events that occurred, as well as memoirs of all those members of their several families who were distinguished for virtue and knowledge; and that there is no reason to suppose that similar records were not kept in some families at least before the flood. Dr. Gleig further conceives that the art of writing was communicated, among others, to Noah and his sons by their antediluvian ancestors, and that it has never since been wholly lost; and that, if this were the case, there probably were in the family of Abraham books of Jasher, or annals commencing from the beginning of the world; and, if so, Moses might have found in them an account of the events which constitute the subject of the book of Genesis.

On the continent the hypothesis of Calmet was adopted by M. Astruc*, who fancied that he discovered traces of *twelve* different antient documents, from which the earlier chapters of Exodus, as well as the entire book of Genesis, are compiled. These, however, were reduced by Eichorn† to two in number, which he affirms may be distinguished by the appellations of Elohim and Jehovah, given to the Almighty. The hypothesis of Eichorn is adopted by Rosenmüller‡, (from whom it was borrowed by the late Dr. Geddes §) and is partially acceded to by Jahn. To this hypothesis there is but one objection, and we apprehend that it is a fatal one; namely, the *total silence* of Moses as to any documents consulted by him. He has, it is true, referred in Numbers xxi. 14. to the “Book of the Wars of the Lord ||;” but if he had copied from any previously existing memoirs, is it likely that such an historian, every page of whose writings is stamped with every possible mark of authenticity and integrity, would have omitted to specify the sources whence he derived his history? Should the reader, however, be disposed to adopt the hypothesis of Calmet, without the refinements of Eichorn and his followers, this will not in the smallest degree detract from the divine authority of the book of Genesis. It was undoubtedly composed by Moses, who was unquestionably inspired, and it has been received as his by his countrymen in all ages. But it is not necessary to suppose that he received

* Conjectures sur les Memoires Originaux dont il paroît que Moyse s'est servi pour composer le livre de la Genese. 8vo. Bruxelles, 1753.

† Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Introduction to the Old Testament), part ii. § 416. p. 245.

‡ Rosenmüller, Scholia in Vet. Test. tom. i. pp. 7—12. Lipsiæ, 1795.

§ In his translation of the Bible, vol. i. and his critical remarks.

|| See some observations on this book, *infra* Sect. V. § vii. p. 49.

by inspiration an account of facts, which he might easily have obtained by natural means. All that is necessary to believe is, that the spirit of God directed him in the choice of the facts recorded in his work; enabled him to represent them without partiality; and preserved him from being led into mistakes by any inaccuracy that might have found its way into the annals which he consulted. "If this be admitted, it is of no consequence whether Moses compiled the book of Genesis from annals preserved in the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or wrote the whole of it by immediate inspiration: for, on either supposition, it is a narrative of divine authority, and contains an authentic account of facts, which constitute the foundation of the Jewish and Christian religions; or, to use more accurate language, the one great but progressive scheme of revealed religion*."

III. Although nothing is more certain than that this book was written by Moses, it is by no means agreed *when* he composed the history it contains. Eusebius and some eminent critics after him have conjectured that it was written while he kept the flocks of Jethro his father-in-law in the wilderness of Midian. But the more probable opinion is that of Theodoret, and adopted by Moldenhawer and most modern critics, viz. that Moses wrote this book after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and the promulgation of the law from Sinai: for, previously to his receiving the divine call related in Exodus iii., he was only a private individual, and not endued with the spirit of prophecy. Without that spirit he could not have recorded, with so much accuracy, the history of the creation and the subsequent transactions to his own time: neither could he have foretold events then future; as in the predictions concerning the Messiah, and those respecting the descendants of Ishmael and the sons of Jacob: the verification and confirmation of which depended on circumstances that had not taken place, nor could have happened at the time when the history was written in which they are recorded; but which, we know, *did* take place exactly as they were foretold; and which may be said even now to have an actual accomplishment before our eyes. A third conjecture has been offered by some Jewish writers, after Rabbi Moses Ben Nachman; who suppose that God dictated to Moses all the contents of the book, during the forty days that he was permitted to hold a communication with the Almighty on Mount Sinai; and that on his descent he committed

* Bishop Gleig's edition of Stackhouse, vol. i. p. 21.

the whole to writing. This hypothesis they found on Exodus xxiv. 12. where Jehovah says unto Moses—"Come up to me in the Mount, and be thou there, and I will give thee the tables of stone, and the law, and the precepts, which I have written, to teach them:"—understanding, by the *tables*, the *decalogue*; by the *precepts*, all the *ceremonial and judicial ordinances*; and by the *law*, all the other writings of Moses, whether historical or doctrinal*. "It is, however," as a pious writer has well remarked, "as impossible, as it is of little consequence, to determine which of these opinions is best founded; and it is sufficient for us to know, that Moses was assisted by the Spirit of infallible truth in the composition of this sacred work, which he deemed a proper introduction to the laws and judgments delivered in the subsequent books."

IV. The book of Genesis comprises the history of about 2369 years according to the vulgar computation of time, or of 3619 years according to the larger computation of Dr. Hales. Besides the history of the creation, it contains an account of the original innocence and fall of man; the propagation of mankind; the rise of religion; the general defection and corruption of the world; the deluge; the restoration of the world; the division and peopling of the earth; the call of Abraham, and the divine covenant with him; together with the first patriarchs, to the death of Joseph. Several of these patriarchs were illustrious TYPES of the Messiah, as *Adam*; (Rom. v. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 45.) *Abel*; (Heb. xii. 24.) *Enoch*; *Noah*; (Matt. xxiv. 37. Luke xvii. 26.) *Melchizedek*; (Psal. cx. Heb. vii.) *Abraham* and *Isaac*; (Heb. xi. 18, 19.) *Jacob* and *Joseph*. This book also comprises some important prophecies respecting the Messiah. See iii. 15. xii. 3. xviii. 18. xxii. 18. xxvi. 4. xxvii. 14. and xlix. 10. 18.

V. The SCOPE of the book of Genesis may be considered as two-fold:—1. To record the history of the world from the commencement of time; and, 2. To relate the origin of the church. With this view it narrates the true origin and history of all created things, in opposition to the erroneous notions entertained by the heathen nations; the origin of sin, and of all moral and physical evil; the establishment of the knowledge and worship of the only true God among mankind; their declension into idolatry; the promise of the Messiah; together with the origin of the church, and her progress and condition

* Pareus, Proleg. in Genesin, pp. 9, 10. Francofurti, 1647.

for many ages. Further, it makes known to the Israelites the providential history of their ancestors, and the divine promises made to them; and shows them the reason why the Almighty chose Abraham and his posterity to be a peculiar people to the exclusion of all other nations, viz. that from them should spring the Messiah. This circumstance must be kept in view throughout the reading of this book, as it will illustrate many otherwise unaccountable circumstances there related. It was this hope that led Eve to exclaim—*I have gotten a man—the Lord.* (Gen. iv. 1. Heb.) The polygamy of Lamech may be accounted for by the hope that the Messiah would be born of some of his posterity, as also the incest of Lot's daughters, (Gen. xix. 31—38.) Sarah's impatience of her barrenness, (Gen. xvi.) the polygamy of Jacob, (Gen. xxix.) the consequent jealousies between Leah and Rachel, (Gen. xxx.); the jealousies between Ishmael and Isaac, and especially Rebekah's preference of Jacob to Esau. It was these jealousies, and these pretensions to the promise of the Messiah, that gave rise to the custom of calling God, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and not the God of Lot, Ishmael, and Esau, the promise having been particularly made and repeated to those three patriarchs*.

VI. The Jews divide the book of Genesis into twelve parishes or larger sections, and forty-three siderim or smaller sections; in our Bibles it consists of fifty chapters, the general contents and leading divisions of which are exhibited in the following synopsis:—

SECT. 1. The origin of the world, (ch. i. ii.)

SECT. 2. The history of the former world, (ch. iii.—vii.)

- (i.) The fall of man and his expulsion from Paradise, (iii.)
- (ii.) The history of Adam and his descendants to Noah, (iv. v.)
- (iii.) The increase of wickedness in the world, and its destruction by the deluge, (vi. vii.)

SECT. 3. The general history of mankind after the deluge, (viii.—xi.)

- (i.) The restoration of the world, (viii.)
- (ii.) The intoxication of Noah, (ix.)
- (iii.) The peopling of the world by his descendants, (x.)
- (iv.) The confusion of tongues and dispersion of mankind, (xi.)

* Allis's Reflections upon Genesis, (Bishop Watson's Collection of Tracts, vol. i. pp. 247—252.)

SECT. 4. The particular history of the patriarchs, (xii.—l.)

(i.) History of Abraham and his family, (xi.—xx.) the birth of Isaac, (xxi.) trial of Abraham, (xxii.) the death of Sarah, (xxiii.) marriage of Isaac, (xxiv.) and death of Abraham, (xxv.)

(ii.) The history of the church under the patriarch Isaac, (xxv.—xxvi.)

(iii.) The history of the church under the patriarch Jacob, (xxvii.—xxxvi.)

(iv.) The history of the church under the patriarch Joseph, (xxxvii.—l.)

a. The afflictions of Jacob and Joseph:—Joseph sold into Egypt, (xxxvii.) the incest of Judah, (xxxviii.) the imprisonment of Joseph by Potiphar, (xxxix. xl.)

b. The deliverance and prosperity of Joseph:—his promotion in the court of Pharaoh, (xli.) the journeys of his brethren into Egypt to purchase corn, (xlii.—xlv.) the descent of Jacob into that country, and settlement there with his family, (xlvi.—xlviii.) his prophetic benedictions of his children, (xlix.) the burial of Jacob, and the death and burial of Joseph, (l.)

VII. From an imaginary difficulty in explaining the literal sense of the first three chapters of Genesis, (a difficulty however which exists not with the devout reader of the sacred volume) some learned men *, who admit the Pentateuch to have been written by Moses, have contended that the narrative of the creation and fall is not a recital of real events, but an ingenious philosophical *mythos*, or fable, invented by Moses, after the example of antient Greek writers, to give the greater weight to his legislative enactments! and designed to account for the origin of human evil, and also as an introduction to a history, great part of which they consider to be a mere poetic fiction. But the inventors of this fiction (for such only can we term it) have assumed *that* as proved which *never had any existence*: for the earliest Grecian cosmogony extant, namely, that of Hesiod, was not composed until at least five hundred and forty-five

* This notion is current among the divines of Germany; it is particularly enlarged upon by Bauer, (Herm. Sacr. pp. 351—365.); is inserted by Rosenmüller as if it were an indisputable fact, (Scholia in Vet. Test. tom. i. p. 11.) and is adopted by Dr. Geddes in his Translation of the Bible, (vol. i.) and also in his Critical Remarks, of which the reader will find a masterly refutation in the British Critic. (O. S.) vol. xix. pp. 6—13.

years *after* the death of Moses! Besides, "if it be granted that Moses was an inspired lawgiver, it becomes impossible to suppose that he wrote a fabulous account of the creation and fall of man, and delivered it as a divine revelation, because that would have been little, if it all, short of blasphemy; we must therefore believe this account to be true, or that it was declared and understood by the people, to whom it was addressed, to be allegorical. No such declaration was ever made; nor is there any mention of such an opinion being generally prevalent among the Jews in any early writing. The Rabbis indeed, of later times, built a heap of absurd doctrines upon this history; but this proves, if it proves any thing, that their ancestors ever understood it as a literal and true account: and, in fact, the truth of every part of the narrative contained in the book of Genesis is positively confirmed by the constant testimony of a people, who preserved a certain unmixed genealogy, from father to son, through a long succession of ages; and by these people we are assured, that their ancestors ever did believe that this account, as far as it fell within human cognizance, had the authority of uninterrupted tradition from their first parent Adam, till it was written by the inspired pen of Moses*."

"The account of the Creation," says Dr. Gray, "is not to be considered as allegorical, or merely figurative, any more than the history of the Temptation, and of the Fall from Innocence, since the whole description is unquestionably delivered as real, and is so considered by all the sacred writers†. In the explanation of Scripture, indeed, no interpretation, which tends to supersede the literal sense, should be admitted; and for this reason also it is, that those speculations, which are spun out with a view to render particular relations in the book of Genesis more consistent with our ideas of probability, should be received at least with great diffidence and caution. To represent the formation of the woman from Adam's rib, as a work performed in an imaginary sense, or as pictured to the mind in vision, seems to be too great a departure from the plain rules which should be observed in the construction of Scripture‡. and inconsistent with the expositions of the sacred writers. So likewise the wrestling of Jacob with an angel§, though some-

* Bishop Tomline's Elements of Christ. Theol. vol. i. p. 64.

† John viii. 44. 2 Cor. xi. 3. 1 Tim. ii. 13. Rev. xii. 9. Allix's Reflections on Genesis. Waterland's General Preface to Scripture vindicated. Witty's Essay towards the Vindication of Mosaic History. Nichol's Conference with a Theist. Bochart de Scrip. Pentat.

‡ Gen. i. 22, 23. This is related by Moses as a real operation, though performed while Adam was in a deep sleep, and is so considered by the sacred writers. (1 Cor. x. 8, 9.)

§ Gen. xxxii. 2.

times considered as a scenical representation addressed to the fancy of the patriarch, should rather be contemplated, like the temptation of Abraham, as a literal transaction, though perhaps of a figurative character; and like that, it was designed to convey information, by actions instead of words, of certain particulars, which it imported the patriarch to know, and which he readily collected from a mode of revelation so customary in the early ages of the world, however it may seem incongruous to those who cannot raise their minds to the contemplation of any economy which they have not experienced, and who proudly question every event not consistent with their notions of propriety *".—"To consider the whole of the Mosaic narration as an allegory, is not only to throw over it the veil of inexplicable confusion, and involve the whole Pentateuch in doubt and obscurity, but to shake to its very basis Christianity, which commences in the promise, that 'the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent.' In reality, if we take the history of the Fall in any other sense than the obvious literal sense, we plunge into greater perplexities than ever. Some well-meaning pious commentators have indeed endeavoured to reconcile all difficulties, by considering some parts of the Mosaic history in an allegorical, and other parts in a literal sense; but this is to act in a manner utterly inconsistent with the tenor and spirit of that history, and with the views of a writer, the distinguishing characteristics of whose production are simplicity, purity, and truth. There is no medium nor palliation; the whole is allegorical, or the whole is literal †."

In short, the book of Genesis, understood in its plain, obvious, and literal sense, furnishes a key to many difficulties in philosophy, which would otherwise be inexplicable. Thus it has been reckoned a great difficulty to account for the introduction of fossil shells into the bowels of the earth: but the scriptural account of the deluge explains this fact better than all the romantic theories of philosophers ‡. It is impossible to account for the origin of such a variety of languages, in a more satisfactory manner than is done in the account of the confusion of tongues which took place at Babel. (Gen. xi. 1—9.) And although some futile objections have been made against the chronology of this book, because it makes the world less antient than is necessary to support the theories of some modern self-styled philosophers; yet even here, the more rigorously it is

* Gray's Key, p. 87. 5th edition.

† Maurice's History of Hindostan, vol. i. p. 368.

‡ See Vol. I. pp. 484—486.

examined, and compared with the extravagant and improbable accounts of the Chaldean, Egyptian, Chinese, and Hindū chronology, the more firmly are its veracity and authenticity established *. In fine, without this history, the world would be in comparative darkness, not knowing whence it came, nor whither it goeth. In the first page of this sacred book, a *child* may learn more in an hour, than all the *philosophers* in the world learned without it in a thousand years. †

* The extravagant antiquity claimed for the priority of the Hindū records over those of Moses, by M. Bailly and some other modern writers, has been fully disproved by Count Laplace, in his *Exposition du Système du Monde*, pp. 293, 294, 4to, or vol. ii. pp. 250—254 of Mr. Pond's English translation. The subject is also considered by Mr. Carwithen in the second of his Bampton Lectures; but the most compendious view of it is to be found in Mr. Nare's Bampton Lectures, pp. 222—227, and especially his lucid and satisfactory note, pp. 256—273, which, depending upon minute calculations and deductions, will not admit of abridgment. Dr. Gray has also some judicious observations on this subject, in his *Key*, pp. 82—85.

† Fuller's *Expository Discourses on Genesis*, vol. i. p. 1.

SECTION III.

ON THE BOOK OF EXODUS.

I. *Title*;—II. *Author*;—III. *Occasion and subject-matter*;—IV. *Scope*;—V. *Types of the Messiah*;—VI. *Synopsis of its contents*.

I. THE title of this book is derived from the Septuagint version, and is significant of the principal transaction which it records—namely, the ΕΞΟΔΟΣ, EXODUS, or departure of the Israelites from Egypt. By the Jews, and in the Hebrew copies, it is termed יְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת *Ve-elleh Shemoth*, “and these are the words,” from the initial words of the book, or sometimes merely *Shemoth*. It comprises a history of the events that took place during the period of 145 years, from the year of the world 2369 to 2514 inclusive, from the death of Joseph to the erection of the tabernacle. Twenty-five passages, according to Rivet, are quoted from Exodus by our Saviour and his apostles in express words; and nineteen allusions to the sense are made in the New Testament.

II. That Moses was the author of this book we have already shown, though the time when it was written cannot be precisely determined. As, however, it is a history of matters of fact, it was doubtless written after the giving of the law on Mount Sinai and the erecting of the tabernacle: for things cannot be

historically related until they have actually taken place, and the author of this book was evidently an eye and ear-witness of the events he has narrated.

III. Moses having, in the preceding book, described the creation of the world, the propagation of the nations, and the origin of the church, now comes, in the book of Exodus, to describe the state and condition of the church, as collected out of several families, and united into one body politic or society, the head of which was Jehovah; on which account, the government of the Hebrews, from the time of Moses to the institution of royalty among them, has been termed a *theocracy*. Accordingly, the book of Exodus records the cruel persecution of the Israelites in Egypt under Pharaoh-Rameses II. the birth, exposure, and preservation of Moses; his subsequent flight into Midian, his call and mission to Pharaoh-Amenophis II.; the miracles performed by him and by his brother Aaron: the ten plagues also miraculously inflicted on the Egyptians; the institution of the passover, and the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt; their passage across the Red Sea, and the destruction of their armies; their subsequent journeyings in the Desert, idolatry, and frequent murmurings against God; the promulgation of the law from Mount Sinai, and the erection of the tabernacle.

IV. The scope of Exodus is to preserve the memorial of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and to represent the church of God, *afflicted* and *preserved*, the providential care of God towards her, and the judgments inflicted on her enemies. It plainly points out the accomplishment of the divine promises and prophecies delivered to Abraham, that his posterity would be very numerous, (compare Gen. xv. 5. xvii. 4—6. and xvi. 27. with Numb. i. 1—3. 46.) and that they would be afflicted in a land not their own, whence they should depart in the fourth generation with great substance, (Gen. xv. 13—16. with Exod. xii. 35. 40, 41). Further, in Israel passing from Egypt through the Red Sea, the Wilderness, and Jordan, to the promised land, this book adumbrates the state of the church in the wilderness of this world, until her arrival at the heavenly Canaan—an eternal rest. Saint Paul, in 1 Cor. x. 1, &c. and in various parts of his Epistle to the Hebrews, has shown that these things prefigured, and were applicable to, the Christian church. A careful study of the mediation of Moses will greatly facilitate our understanding the mediation of Jesus Christ.

V. TYPES OF THE MESSIAH are, *Moses*; (compare Deut. xviii. 15.)—*Aaron*; (Heb. iv. 14—16. v. 45.)—*the Paschal*

Lamb; (Exod. xii. 46. with John xix. 36. and 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.)
—the Manna; (Exod. xvi. 15. with 1 Cor. x. 3.)—*the Rock in Horeb*; (Exod. xvii. 6. with 1 Cor. x. 4.)—*the Mercy Seat*; (Exod. xxxvii. 6. with Rom. iii. 25. Heb. iv. 16.)—*the Tabernacle*; (Exod. xl. with John i. 14. Gr.)

VI. By the Jews, the book of Exodus is divided into eleven paraschæ or chapters, and twenty-nine *siderim* or sections: in our Bibles it is divided into forty chapters, the contents of which are exhibited in the annexed synopsis:—

SECT. 1. Account of the transactions previously to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt.

- (i.) The oppression of the children of Israel, (ch. i.)
- (ii.) The youth and transactions of Moses, (ch. ii.—vi.)
- (iii.) The hardening of Pharaoh's heart, and the infliction of the ten plagues, (ch. vii.—xi.)

SECT. 2. The narrative of the departure of the Israelites, (xii.—xiv.)

SECT. 3. Transactions subsequent to their Exodus, (ch. xiv.—xl.)

- (i.) The miraculous passage of the Red Sea, and the thanksgiving of Moses and the people of Israel, on their deliverance from Pharaoh and his host, (ch. xiv. xv. 1—22.)

- (ii.) Relation of various miracles, wrought in behalf of the Israelites, (ch. xv. 23—27. xvi. xvii.)

- (iii.) The arrival of Moses' wife and children, with Jethro, (ch. xviii.)

SECT. 4. The promulgation of the law on Mount Sinai.

- (i.) The preparation of the people of Israel by Moses, for the renewing of the covenant with God, (ch. xix.)

- (ii.) The promulgation of the moral law, (ch. xx.)

- (iii.) The judicial law, (ch. xxi.—xxiii.)

- (iv.) The ceremonial law, including the construction and erection of the tabernacle, (ch. xxv.—xxxi. xxxv.—xl.)

In ch. xxxii.—xxxiv. are related the idolatry of the Israelites, the breaking of the two tables of the law, the Divine chastisement of the Hebrews, and the renewal of the tables of the covenant.

SECTION IV.

ON THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS.

I. *Title, author, and date*; — II. *Scope*; — III. *Synopsis of its contents*.

I. **THE** third book of the Pentateuch, (by the Jews termed ויקרא *Va-yikra*, “and he called,” from its initial word) is in the Septuagint styled ΛΕΥΙΤΙΚΟΝ, and in our version Leviticus, or the Levitical book—not because it treats of the ministry of the Levites, strictly so called, (of which we have a fuller account in the book of Numbers) but because it principally contains the laws concerning the religion of the Israelites, which chiefly consisted of various sacrifices; the charge of which was committed to Aaron the Levite, (as he is termed Exod. iv. 14.) and to his sons, who alone held the priestly office in the tribe of Levi; which Saint Paul therefore calls a “Levitical priesthood,” (Heb. vii. 11.) In the Babylonish Talmud it is called the *law of the priests*, which appellation is retained in the Arabic and Syriac versions.

The author of this book, it is universally admitted, was Moses: and it is cited as his production in several books of Scripture. By comparing Exod. xl. 17. with Numb. i. 1. we learn that this book contains the history of one month, viz. from the erection of the tabernacle to the numbering of the people who were fit for war, that is, from the beginning of the second year after Israel’s departure from Egypt to the beginning of the second month of the same year, which was in the year of the world 2514, and before Christ 1490. The laws prescribed upon other subjects than sacrifices, have no chronological marks by which we can judge of the times when they were given.

II. The general scope of this book is, to make known to the Israelites the Levitical laws, sacrifices, and ordinances, and by those “shadows of good things to come,” to lead the Israelites to the Messiah (Heb. x. 1. with Gal. iii. 24.): and it appears from the argument of Saint Paul, that they had some idea of the spiritual meaning of these various institutions, (1 Cor. x. 1—4). But, more particularly, the Levitical law was designed (1.) to preserve the Israelites, (who, from their long residence in Egypt, were but too prone to idolatry) a distinct and independent people from the surrounding Gentile nations, by means

of such burthensome, costly, and various ceremonies, that nothing but a conviction of their divine original could induce any people to submit to such a yoke.—(2.) By *expiatory sacrifices* to lead them to Christ, the only true propitiation for our sins, and who alone is able perfectly to purge the conscience, (Heb. ix. x.)—(3.) By *eucharistical* or thanksgiving sacrifices, to lead them to spiritual thankfulness to God for all his benefits;—(4.) By the institution of the high priesthood, to conduct them to Jesus Christ, the great “High Priest,” who hath an unchangeable priesthood, and is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him,” (Heb. vii. 24, 25.)—And lastly, to instruct them, by meats forbidden as unclean, to avoid what God prohibits; and, by various kinds of uncleannesses, with their correspondent expiations, to illustrate the necessity and importance of internal purity and righteousness.

This book is of great use in explaining numerous passages of the New Testament, especially the Epistle to the Hebrews, which in fact would be unintelligible without it. In considering, however, the spiritual tendency of Leviticus, care must be taken not to apply the types *too* extensively: the observation of Jerome as to its spiritual import is undoubtedly very pious and just, but few persons will acquiesce in his remark, that “*almost every syllable* in this book breathes a spiritual sacrament*.”

III. Leviticus is divided by the Jews into nine parasches, which in our Bibles form twenty-seven chapters: it consists of four leading topics, comprising

SECT. 1. THE LAWS CONCERNING SACRIFICES, in which the different kinds of sacrifices are enumerated, together with their concomitant rites; as, 1. the *burnt-offering*, (Lev. i.) which prefigured the full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice of Christ, “to put away sin;” and who by his “one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,” (Heb. ix. 26. x. 14. 1 John i. 7.)—2. The *meat-offerings*, (Lev. ii.)—3. The *peace-offering*, (Lev. iii.) which represented both Christ’s oblation of himself, whereby he became our peace and salvation, (Eph. ii. 14—16. Acts xiii. 47. Heb. v. 9. ix. 28.) and also our oblation of praise, thanksgiving, and prayer to God.—4. The *offering made for sins of ignorance*, (Lev. iv. v.) which, being consumed without the camp, signified Christ’s suffering “without the gate,

* In hoc libro *singula* pene *syllaba* celestia spirat sacramenta; quia ad Christum unicum Novi Testamenti summum sacerdotem figuræ illius nos deducunt. Epist. ad Paulinum.

that he might sanctify the people with his own blood," (Heb. xiii. 11—13.)—5. The *trespass-offering for sins knowingly committed*, (Lev. vi. vii.) in which sacrifice the guilt was considered as being transferred to the animal offered up to Jehovah, and the person offering it, as redeemed from the penalty of sin. Thus Jesus Christ is said to have made his soul an offering for sin, (Isa. liii. 10. with 2 Cor. v. 21.)

SECT. 2. THE INSTITUTION OF THE PRIESTHOOD, in which the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the sacred office is related, together with the punishment of Nadab and Abihu, (Lev. viii.—x.)

SECT. 3. THE LAWS CONCERNING PURIFICATIONS both of the people and the priests, (Lev. xi.—xxii.) among which the regulations concerning leprosy (xiii.) as representing the universal taint of sin, and those concerning the scape-goat and the great day of atonement, (xvi.) demand particular attention; as typifying the death and resurrection of Christ, and the atonement made thereby, (Heb. ix. 7—12. 24—27.); while they at the same time inculcate the hatefulness of sin, and the necessity of internal purity. Chapters xviii. and xix. contain various cautions to the Israelites to avoid the sinful practices of the Egyptians and Canaanites, with laws adapted to the peculiar circumstances and situations of the children of Israel, interspersed with several moral precepts inculcating the duties of humanity and mercy, and the necessity of strict integrity.

SECT. 4. THE LAWS CONCERNING THE SACRED FESTIVALS, VOWS, THINGS DEVOTED, AND TITHES.—Chap. xxiii. treats of the seven great festivals, viz. the sabbath, the passover, the feast of first-fruits, the feast of Pentecost, the feast of trumpets, the great day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles. The celebration of these solemn festivals was of singular use for maintaining the system of divine worship among the Israelites, for distinguishing them from all other people, for the solemn commemoration of the many and great benefits conferred on them by Jehovah, for the preservation and continuance of the public ministry, for preserving purity and unity in divine worship, and lastly, for prefiguring the manifold and great blessings bestowed on mankind by the Messiah. In chap. xxiv. various ceremonial and judicial rites are enjoined; and in chap. xxv. is recapitulated the law respecting the sabbatical year which had before been given, (see Exod. xxiii.); the observance of the jubilee is enjoined, with various precepts respecting mercy, benevolence, &c. The jubilee was typical of the great time of release, the Gospel dispensation. (See Isa. xxvi. 13. and

lxi. 1—3. with Luke iv. 19.) Chap. xxvi. presents various prophetic promises and threatenings which have signally been fulfilled among the Jews. (Compare v. 22. with Numb. xxi. 6. 2 Kings ii. 24. and xvii. 25. with Ezek. v. 17.)* The preservation of the Jews to this day, as a *distinct* people, is a living comment on v. 44. The twenty-seventh and last chapter comprises regulations concerning vows, and things devoted, as well as the tithes which were to be dedicated to the service of the tabernacle.

* In prophetic language, lions and bears denote tyrannical governors. Josephus relates that the prediction in v. 34. which was also denounced by Jeremiah, (xix. 9.) was literally accomplished by a woman of high rank named Mary, at the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans. De Bell. Jud. lib. vii. c. 2.

SECTION V.

ON THE BOOK OF NUMBERS.

I. *Title, Author, Date, and Argument.* — II. *Scope.* — III. *Types of the Messiah.* — IV. *Prediction of the Messiah.* — V. *Chronology.* — VI. *Synopsis of its Contents.* — VII. *Observations on the Book of the Wars of the Lord, mentioned in Numbers xxi. 14.*

1. IN conformity with the Hebrew custom, this fourth book of Moses is usually termed וַיְדַבֵּר, VA-JEDABBER, ‘*and he spake,*’ from the initial word: it is also called בְּמִדְבָּר BEMIDBAR, ‘*In the Desert,*’ which word occurs in the first verse, because it relates the transactions of the Israelites in the wilderness. By the Alexandrian translators it was entitled Αριθμοί, which appellation was adopted by the Greek fathers; and by the Latin translators, it was termed *Numeri, Numbers*, whence our English title is derived; because it contains an account of the numbering of the children of Israel, (related in chapters i—iii. and xxvi). It appears from xxxvi. 13. to have been written by Moses in the plains of Moab. Besides, the numeration and marshalling of the Israelites for their journey, several laws, in addition to those delivered in Exodus and Leviticus, and likewise several remarkable events, are recorded in this book.

II. The scope of the Book of Numbers is, to show how faith-

fully Jehovah fulfilled his promises to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the rapid increase of their posterity, and also in his providential care of them during their journeyings in the wilderness, and finally conducting them to the land of Canaan; together with his impartial severity against their murmurings and corruptions, for which many of them perished in the wilderness after their deliverance from Egypt, "so that they could not enter into his rest because of their unbelief." All these things are our examples, and are "written for our admonition," since the Christian's rest depends upon the same promises as that of the Israelites. (Compare 1 Cor. x. 1—11. Jude 5. Heb. iii. 7—19. iv. 1—11.) The method pursued in this book is precisely that which would be adopted by the writer of an itinerary: the respective stations are noted; and the principal occurrences that took place at each station are related, omitting such as are of comparatively less importance. This circumstance is an additional *internal* proof that Moses was the author of the Book of Numbers, which is cited as his work in many parts of Scripture.

III. TYPES OF THE MESSIAH, are—*The ordinance of the Red Heifer*, (Numb. xix. with Heb. ix. 13, 14, and xiii. 11—13.—*The water that issued from the Rock*, (Numb. xx. 11. with 1 Cor. x. 4.);—*The Brazen Serpent*, (Numb. xxi. with John iii. 14.);—*The Cities of Refuge*, (Numb. xxxv. with Heb. vi. 18, latter part of the verse).

IV. This book contains but one prediction concerning the Messiah, viz. Numb. xxiv. 17. 19, which, Rosenmüller and some other eminent biblical critics have contended, cannot apply to Jesus Christ. This passage, it is true, in its primary and literal meaning, intimates that from the people of Israel should arise a mighty prince, who would obtain an entire conquest and bear rule over the kingdoms of Moab and Edom: and it was fulfilled in David, for it is expressly recorded of him, that he finally subdued those nations, (2 Sam. viii. 2. 14). But, in its full import, it has invariably been considered as referring to that illustrious personage, of whom David was a type and a progenitor; and is in fact a splendid prediction of the final and universal sway of the Messiah, when the middle wall of partition shall be broken down, and both Jews and Gentiles shall become one fold under one shepherd. This explanation is perfectly consonant to many other prophecies concerning the Saviour; which, in similar language, describe him as acquiring dominion over heathen countries, and destroying the enemies of his church: and it is observable, that, in several of these

antient predictions, some particular opposers, as the Moabites and Edomites, are put for the “adversaries of the Lord,” in general. (See Psal. ii. 8. lxxii. 8. cx. 6. Isa. xi. 14. and xxv. 10.) *

In this passage, an eminent critic observes, that Balaam, in prophetic vision, describes the remote coming of Shiloh, under the imagery of a *star* and a *sceptre*, or an illustrious prince. Though it was foretold that “the sceptre should depart from Judah” at his coming, this prophecy confirms to him a proper sceptre of his own; and our Lord claimed it when he avowed himself a “*King*” to Pilate, but declared that his “kingdom was not of this world,” (John xviii. 37, 38.) This branch of the prophecy was fulfilled about 1600 years after; when, at the birth of Christ, “the Magi from the East” (who are supposed by Theophylact to have been the posterity of Balaam) came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the [true] born king of the Jews? for we have seen his *star* at its rising, and are come to worship him,” (Matt. ii. 1, 2.) †

V. The Book of Numbers contains a history of the Israelites, from the beginning of the second month of the second year after their departure from Egypt, to the beginning of the eleventh month of the fortieth year of their journeyings—that is, a period of thirty-eight years and nine or ten months. (Compare Numb. i. 1. and xxxvi. 13. with Deut. i. 3.) Most of the transactions here recorded took place in the second and thirty-eighth years: “the dates of the facts related in the middle of the book cannot be precisely ascertained.”

VI. According to the Jewish division, this portion of Holy Writ contains ten *parasches* or chapters; in our Bibles it consists of thirty-six chapters, which comprize four principal parts or sections.

SECT. 1. THE CENSUS OF THE ISRAELITES, and the mar-

* Robinson's Scripture Characters, vol. i. p. 480.—The same author adds—“Jesus, then, is the “*Star*” which Balaam foretold; “the bright and morning star,” which, “through the tender mercy of our God, hath visited us,” (Luke i. 78. Rev. xxii. 16); and to him also “the sceptre” of universal government is committed. “He shall have dominion;” for “he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet,” (1 Cor. xv. 25). Balaam looked forward to the time of his coming, which is usually called, as in Numb. xxiv. 14. “the latter days:” and concerning him, he said, “I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh;” which might intimate, that his appearance was far removed, and that he should see him only by the spirit of prophecy. But it may also refer to the second advent of the Saviour, when indeed both Balaam and every despiser of his grace “shall see him” in his glory,—“shall behold him, but not nigh:” for they shall be driven out from him with shame and confusion, and “be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” Ibid. p. 481.

* Dr. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book i. p. 229.



shalling of them into a regular camp, “each tribe by itself under its own captain or chief, distinguished by his own peculiar standard, and occupying an assigned place with reference to the tabernacle,” (Numb. i. ii.) The *sacred* census of the Levites, the designation of them to the sacred office, and the appointment of them to various services in the tabernacle, are related in Numb. iii. and iv.

SECT. 2. THE INSTITUTION OF VARIOUS LEGAL CEREMONIES,—as the purification of the camp, by the removal of all unclean persons from it, and the trial of the suspected adulteress by the waters of jealousy, (Numb. v.);—the institution of the Nazareate (vi.);—an account of the oblations made to the tabernacle by the princes or heads of tribes (vii.);—the consecration of the Levites (viii.);—the celebration of the passover (ix.); regulations concerning the moving or resting of the camp of Israel during their progress (x).

SECT. 3. THE HISTORY OF THEIR JOURNEY FROM MOUNT SINAI TO THE LAND OF MOAB, which may be described and distinguished by their eight remarkable *murmurings* in the way; every one of which was visited with severe chastisement, viz.

- (i.) *On account of the length of the way; which was punished by fire at Taberah (xi. 1—4).*
- (ii.) *Their murmuring for flesh and loathing of manna, punished by the sending of quails and a pestilence xi. 5—35).*
- (iii.) *The murmuring of Aaron and Miriam at Moses, for which Miriam was smitten with a leprosy (xii).*
- (iv.) *The murmuring of the people at Kadesh, in consequence of the unfavourable report of the spies who had been sent to explore the promised land; for which those of the spies who had brought an evil report died of the plague; and the murmuring congregation were deprived of seeing the promised land. This was the occasion of the Israelites wandering so long in the wilderness, until the whole of that generation, that is, all who were twenty years old and upwards, was destroyed (xiii. xiv.) In ch. xv. some ordinances are given for conducting the worship of Jehovah in the land of Canaan.*
- (v.) *The murmuring and rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their followers, with their punishment (xvi. 1—40.)*

(vi.) *The murmuring of the people against Moses and Aaron*, on account of the preceding judgment, and their punishment (xvi. 41—50.) The miraculous budding of Aaron's rod among the rods of the tribes, which was deposited in the tabernacle as a confirmation of his priesthood, and as a testimony against the murmurers (xvii.); which was succeeded by some directions concerning the dignity and superiority of the priestly office over that of the Levites, and respecting the maintenance of both (xviii.), together with regulations concerning the water of separation made with the ashes of a red cow (xix.)

(vii.) *Their murmuring in the desert of Zin for water*, the unbelief of Moses, the perfidy of the Edomites, and Aaron's death (xx).

(viii.) *Their murmuring while they compassed the land of Edom*, on account of their discouraging way, light bread, and want of water; for which they were punished with fiery serpents (xxi).

SECT. 4. A HISTORY OF THE TRANSACTIONS which took place in the plains of Moab (xxii—xxxvi.) including,

(i.) The machinations of their enemies against them, their frustration, and the prophecies of Balaam respecting the Jews and their enemies *, the ensnaring of the Israelites to commit idolatry by the Moabites, with their consequent punishment (xxii—xxv).

(ii.) A second enumeration of the people (xxvi.); in which are displayed the singular providence of God, and the further accomplishment of his promise to the patriarchs, in multiplying the people of Israel so exceedingly, that in all the tribes there were only 61,020 men less than at the first census †, notwithstanding the whole of that murmuring generation (with the exception of Joshua and Caleb) perished in the wilderness.

* On the accomplishment of all these prophecies delivered by Balaam, consult Bishop Newton's Dissertations, vol. i. diss. v.—“ Though God had probably rejected Balaam as an apostate prophet, he deigned to employ him on this signal occasion as the herald of the divine oracles; to illustrate the impotency of the heathen arts, and to demonstrate the power and foreknowledge of the Divine Spirit.” (Dr. Gray). Bishop Butler has a fine discourse on the character of Balaam, Works, vol. i. serm. vii.

† The following comparative statement will show how much some of the tribes had increased, and others had diminished, since the enumeration in chap. i.

- (iii.) The remaining chapters relate the appointment of Joshua to be the successor of Moses, regulations concerning sacrifices, and the partition of the promised land (xxvii.—xxxvi).

VII. Few passages in the Pentateuch have more exercised the ingenuity of biblical critics, than “the Book of the Wars of the Lord,” mentioned in Numb. xxi. 14. Aben-Ezra, Hottinger, and others, are of opinion that it refers to this book of the Pentateuch, because in it are related various battles of the Israelites with the Amorites: Hezelius, and after him Michaelis, think it was an Amoritish writing, containing triumphal songs in honour of the victories obtained by Sihon king of the Amorites, from which Moses cited the words that immediately follow. Fonseca and some others refer it to the book of Judges. Le Clerc understands it of the wars of the Israelites who fought under the direction of Jehovah, and, instead of book, he translates it, with most of the Jewish doctors, *narration*; and proposes to render the verse thus:—“Wherefore, in the narration of the wars of the Lord, there is (or shall be) mention of what he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon.”—Lastly, Dr. Lightfoot considers this book to have been some book of remembrances and directions written by Moses for Joshua’s private instruction, for the prosecution of the wars after his decease. (See Exod. xvii. 14—16). This opinion appears to us the most simple, and is in all probability the true one.

	Now.		Before.		
Reuben	- 43,730	-	46,500	-	2,770 decrease
Simeon	- 22,200	-	59,300	-	37,100 decrease
Gad	- 40,500	-	45,650	-	5,150 decrease
Judah	- 76,500	-	74,600	-	1,900 increase
Issachar	- 64,300	-	54,400	-	9,900 increase
Zebulon	- 60,500	-	57,400	-	3,100 increase
Manasseh	- 52,700	-	32,200	-	20,500 increase
Ephraim	- 32,500	-	40,500	-	8,000 decrease
Benjamin	- 45,600	-	35,400	-	10,200 increase
Dan	- 64,400	-	62,700	-	1,700 increase
Asher	- 53,400	-	41,500	-	11,900 increase
Naphtali	- 45,400	-	53,400	-	8,000 decrease
Total	601,730		603,550		1,820 decrease on the whole in 38 years.

Decrease in all 61,020 Increase in all, 59,200.”

Dr. A. Clarke on Numb. xxvi. 51.

SECTION VI.

ON THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

I. *Title, date, and chronology*; — II. *Scope*; — III. *Predictions of the Messiah*; — IV. *Synopsis of contents*; — V. *Observations*.

I. **THIS** fifth book of Moses derives its name from the title (*Δευτερονόμιον*) prefixed to it by the translators of the Septuagint version, which is a compound term, signifying the *second law*, or *the law repeated*; because it contains a repetition of the law of God, given by Moses to the Israelites. In Hebrew it is, from the same circumstance, called *משנה Misneh* or repetition; but, most usually, *אלה הדברים Elleh Hadebarim*, i. e. *these are the words*, or simply *דברים Debarim*, the Words. From a comparison of Deut. i. 5. with xxiv. 1. it appears to have been written by Moses in the plains of Moab, a short time before his death: and this circumstance will account for that affectionate earnestness with which he addresses the Israelites. The period of time comprised in this book is five *lunar* weeks, or, according to some chronologers, about two months, viz. from the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year after the exodus of Israel from Egypt, to the eleventh day of the twelfth month of the same year, A. M. 2553. B. C. 1451. From the account of Moses' death recorded in the thirty-fourth chapter of this book, and the insertion of some explanatory words in other parts of Deuteronomy, it has been insinuated that Moses could not have been its author: but the following remark will clearly prove this notion to be unfounded. The words of Moses evidently conclude with the thirty-third chapter: the thirty-fourth was added to complete the history, the first eight verses probably immediately after his death by his successor Joshua, the last four by some later writer, probably Samuel or Ezra, or some prophet that succeeded him. They were admitted by Ezra as authentic, and we have no reason to question the fidelity of this account.* Another and equally satisfactory solution of this difficulty is the following: viz. that what *now* forms the *last* chapter of Deuteronomy, was formerly the first of Joshua, but was removed thence, and joined to the former by way of supplement. This opinion will not appear improbable, when it is considered that sections and other divisions, as well as points, and pauses were invented long since these

* Dr. Graves, Lect. on Pentateuch, vol. i. p. 350. Dr. Gray, Key, p. 122.

books were written: for, in those early ages, several books were connected together, and followed each other on the same roll. The beginning of one book might therefore be easily transferred to the end of another, and in process of time be considered as its real conclusion, as in the case of Deuteronomy; especially as this supplemental chapter contains an account of the last transactions and death of the great author of the Pentateuch. *

II. The scope of the book of Deuteronomy is, to repeat to the Israelites, before Moses left them, the chief laws of God which had been given to them; that those, who were not born at the time when they were originally delivered, or were incapable of understanding them, might be instructed in these laws, and excited to attend to them, and consequently be better prepared for the promised land upon which they were entering. With this view the sacred historian recapitulates the various mercies which God had bestowed upon them and their forefathers, from their departure out of Egypt; the victories which by divine assistance they had obtained over their enemies; their rebellion, ingratitude, and chastisements. The moral, ceremonial, and judicial laws are repeated with additions and explanations: and the people are urged to obedience in the most affectionate manner, from the consideration of the endearing promises made to them by God, which he would assuredly perform, if they did not frustrate his designs of mercy by their own wilful obstinacy. That no person might thereafter plead ignorance of the divine law, he commanded that it should be read to all the people at the end of every seventh year; and concluded his ministerial labours among the Israelites by a most admirable ode, which he commanded every one to learn, and by giving his prophetic benediction to the twelve tribes.

III. This book contains only one PROPHECY RELATIVE TO THE MESSIAH, viz. Deut. xviii. 15. 18, 19. which was fulfilled fifteen hundred years after it had been delivered, and is expressly applied to Jesus Christ, in Acts iii. 22, 23. and vii. 37 †: it also comprizes several very remarkable predictions relative to the Israelites, some of which are fulfilled before our eyes. “These prophecies,” it has been justly remarked ‡,

* Alexander's Hebrew and English Pentateuch, cited by Dr. Clarke, on Deut. xxxiv. who is of opinion that this chapter should constitute the first chapter of the book of Joshua.

† On the accomplishment of this prediction, see Bishop Newton's *Sixth Dissertation*, and Dr. Jortin's *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i. pp. 130—149. edit. 1768.

‡ By Mr. Hewlett, *Introd. to Deut.* in vol. i. of his *Commentary on the Bible*, 4to edit.

“become more numerous and distinct towards the close of his life. His denunciations with respect to the future state of the Israelites; the sufferings, the dispersions, and the devastations to which they were to be subject; the prophetic blessings which he pronounced on the different tribes by name; the clear foresight which he had of the rapid victories of their invaders, and of the extreme miseries which they were to experience when besieged; his express predictions relating to the future condition of the Jews, which we see accomplished in the present day:—all these circumstances, when united, bear ample testimony to the truth and authenticity of this sacred book, and present to our minds a memorable instance of the divine justice.”

IV. The Jews divide this book into ten parasches or chapters: in our Bibles it consists of thirty-four chapters, the contents of which may be arranged under the four following heads:

SECT. 1. A REPETITION OF THE HISTORY RELATED IN THE PRECEDING BOOKS, comprising a relation of the events that took place in the wilderness, from their leaving mount Horeb until their arrival at Kadesh, (Deut. i.); their journey from Kadesh till they came to the land of the Amorites, and the defeat of Sihon their king, and of Og king of Bashan, together with the division of their territories among the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh (ii. iii); and an exhortation to obey the divine law, and to avoid idolatry, founded on their past experience of the goodness of God (iv).

SECT. 2. A REPETITION OF THE MORAL, CEREMONIAL, AND JUDICIAL LAW; containing

(i.) *A repetition of the moral law, or ten commandments* (v. 1—22). and its effect upon the people of Israel (v. 22—33); an exposition of the *first* commandment, with an exhortation to love God with all their hearts (vi.)—an exposition of the second commandment against idolatry, prohibiting any intercourse with the idolatrous nations, and enjoining the extirpation of the Canaanites and every vestige of their idolatry (vii);—strong motives to obedience, arising from a review of their past mercies, and from the consideration that Jehovah was about to conduct them into the promised land, not on account of their own righteousness, but of his great mercy (viii. ix. x. xi).

(ii.) *A repetition of the ceremonial law, (xii—xvi.)—a command to abolish all idolatry, and regulations for*

the worship of God (xii);—laws against false prophets, and idolatrous cities (xiii);—prohibition against disfiguring themselves in mourning (xiv. 1—2);—a recapitulation of the law concerning clean and unclean animals (xiv. 3—21), and the payment of tithes to the Levites (xiv. 22—29);—regulations concerning the year of release (xv);—concerning the stated annual feasts, the Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Tabernacles (xvi. 1—17), the election of judges, and administration of justice (xvi. 18—20);—a prohibition against planting groves or setting up idols near the altar of God (xvi. 21, 22).

- (iii.) *A repetition and exposition of the judicial law* (xvii—xxvi)—a command to put idolaters to death, regulations for determining difficult controversies, and concerning the election and qualifications of a king (xvii);—the maintenance of the priests and Levites (xviii. 1—8);—cautions against following the abominations of the Gentile nations, especially divination (xviii. 9—14);—a prediction relative to the great prophet that should arise (xviii. 15—19);—criteria for distinguishing false prophets from true ones (xviii. 20—22);—laws relative to the cities of refuge (xix. 1—10), the treatment of murderers, (xix. 11—13), and the evidences of witnesses (xix. 15—21);—laws concerning war, and the treatment of the Canaanites (xx);—the expiation of uncertain murder, marriage with captives, rights of the first-born, punishment of a disobedient son, &c. (xxi);—regulations concerning things lost or strayed, the distinguishing of the sexes by their apparel; punishment of adultery, &c. (xxii);—who may or may not enter into the congregation—prohibition against all uncleanness—regulations concerning usury, vows, and trespasses (xxiii);—of divorces, the privileges of newly married men, pledges, man-stealing, wages, the execution of justice, and gleanings (xxiv);—concerning lawsuits and punishments, weights and measures, &c. (xxv);—ceremonies to be observed in offering first-fruits, (xxvi. 1—15);—the covenant between God and the Israelites (xxvi. 16—19).

SECT. 3. THE CONFIRMATION OF THE LAW; for which purpose the law was to be written on stones, and set up on mount Ebal (xxvii);—prophetic promises to the obedient, and curses

against the disobedient (xxviii *);—an exhortation to obedience from a review of their past mercies, and to dedicate themselves and their posterity to God (xxix);—promises of pardon to the repentant (xxx. 1—14);—good and evil set before them (xxx. 15—20).

SECT. 4. THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF MOSES, UNTIL HIS DEATH, containing his appointment of Joshua to be his successor (xxxi. 1—8);—his delivery of a copy of the law to the priests, to be deposited in the ark, and publicly read every seventh year (xxxi. 9—14);—a solemn charge given to Joshua, &c. (xxxi. 15—21);—the people convened to hear the prophetic and historical ode of Moses (xxxi. 28—30), which occupies nearly the whole of chapter xxxii;—his prophetic blessing of the twelve tribes, and their peculiar felicity and privilege in having Jehovah for their God and protector (xxxiii);—the death and burial of Moses (xxxiv).

V. “The book of Deuteronomy and the Epistle to the Hebrews contain the best comment on the nature, design, and use of the law: the former may be considered as an evangelical commentary on the four preceding books, in which the spiritual reference and signification of the different parts of the law are given, and given in such a manner as none could give, who had not a clear discovery of the glory which was to be revealed. It may be safely asserted that very few parts of the Old Testament Scriptures can be read with greater profit by the genuine Christian than the book of Deuteronomy.” †

The prophetic ode of Moses is one of the noblest compositions in the sacred volume: it contains a justification on the part of God against the Israelites, and an explanation of the nature and design of the divine judgments. The exordium, Bishop Lowth remarks, is singularly magnificent: the plan and conduct of the poem is just and natural, and well accommodated to the subject, for it is almost in the order of an historical narration. It embraces a variety of subjects and sentiments; it displays the truth and justice of God, his paternal love, and his unfailing tenderness to his chosen people; and, on the other hand, their ungrateful and contumacious spirit. The ardour of the divine indignation, and the heavy denunciations of vengeance, are afterwards expressed in a remarkable personification, which is scarcely to be paralleled from all the choicest treasures of the Muses. The fervour of wrath is however tem-

* On the prophecies contained in this chapter, see Bishop Newton, vol. i. diss. vii.

† Dr. A. Clarke, Pref. to Deut. p. ii. in vol. i. of his Commentary.

pered with the mildest beams of lenity and mercy, and ends at last in promises and consolation. The subject and style of this poem bear so exact a resemblance to the prophetic as well as to the lyric compositions of the Hebrews, that it unites all the force, energy, and boldness of the latter, with the exquisite variety and grandeur of the former. *

* Bishop Lowth's Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, Lect. 28. at the beginning.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE HISTORICAL BOOKS.

SECTION I.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE HISTORICAL BOOKS.

THIS division of the sacred writings comprises twelve books, viz. from Joshua to Esther inclusive: the first seven of these books are, by the Jews, called the *former prophets*, probably because they treat of the more antient periods of Jewish history *, and because they are most justly supposed to be written by prophetic men. The events recorded in these books occupy a period of almost one thousand years, which commences at the death of Moses, and terminates with the great national reform effected by Nehemiah, after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity.

It is evident, from an examination of the historical books, that they are collections from the authentic records of the Jewish nation: and it should seem, that though the substance of the several histories was written under divine direction, when the events were fresh in memory, and by persons who were evidently contemporary with the transactions which they have narrated, yet that under the same direction they were disposed in the form, in which they have been transmitted to us, by some other person, long afterwards, and probably all by the same hand, and about the same time. Nothing indeed is more certain than that very ample memoirs or records of the Hebrew republic were written from the first commencement of the theocracy, to which the authors of these books very frequently refer. Such a practice is necessary in a well-constituted state; we have evidence from the sacred writings that it antiently obtained among the heathen nations, (compare Esther ii. 23. and vi. 1): and there is evident proof that it likewise prevailed among the Israelites from the very beginning of their polity. (See Exod. xvii. 14.) Hence it is that we find the Book of Jasher referred to in Josh. x. 13. and 2 Sam. i. 18. and that we also find such frequent references to the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel

* On the Jewish Divisions of the Canon of Scripture, see pp. 8—10, *supra*.

and Judah in the books of Samuel and Kings, and also to the books of Gad, Nathan, and Iddo. This conjecture is further strengthened by the two following circumstances, namely, *first*, that the days when the transactions took place are sometimes spoken of as being long since past *, and *secondly*, that things are so frequently mentioned as remaining *to this day*, (as stones †, names of places ‡, rights and possessions §, customs and usages ||); which clauses were subsequently added to the history by the inspired collectors, in order to confirm, and illustrate it, to those of their own age. The learned commentator Henry, to whom we are indebted for these hints, thinks it not unlikely that the historical books, to the end of Kings, were compiled by the prophet Jeremiah, a short time before the captivity: he founds this opinion upon 1 Sam. xxvii. 6. where it is said of Ziklag, that it “*pertaineth to the kings of Judah to this day*,” which form of expression, he very justly remarks, commenced after the time of Solomon, and consequently terminated at the time of the captivity. The remaining five books, from 1 Chronicles to Esther, he thinks it still more probable, were compiled by Ezra the scribe, some time after the captivity; to whom, we have already seen **, uninterrupted testimony ascribes the completion of the sacred canon.

But, although we cannot determine with certainty the authors of the historical books, “yet we may rest assured that the Jews, who had already received inspired books from the hands of Moses, would not have admitted any others as of equal authority, if they had not been fully convinced that the writers were supernaturally assisted. Next to the testimony of Christ and his apostles, which corroborates all our reasoning respecting the inspiration of the Old Testament, (and, when distinct arguments for any particular book cannot be found, supplies their place), we must depend, in the case before us, upon the testimony of the Jews. And although the testimony of a nation is far from being, in every instance, a sufficient reason for believing its sacred books to be possessed of that divine authority which is ascribed to them; yet the testimony of the Jews has a peculiar title to be credited, from the circumstances in which it was delivered. It is the testimony of

* Thus, in 1 Sam. ix. 9. “he that is now called a prophet was *beforetime* called a seer.”

† See Josh. iv. 9. vii. 26. viii. 29. x. 27. 1 Sam. vi. 18.

‡ See Josh. v. 9. vii. 26. Judg. i. 26. xv. 19. xviii. 12. 2 Kings xiv. 7.

§ See Judg. i. 21. and 1 Sam. xxvii. 6.

|| See 1 Sam. v. 5. and 2 Kings xvii. 41.

** See pp. 5, 6, *supra*.

a people, who, having already in their possession genuine inspired books, were the better able to judge of others which advanced a claim to inspiration; and who, we have reason to think, far from being credulous with respect to such a claim, or disposed precipitately to recognize it, proceeded with deliberation and care in examining all pretensions of this nature, and rejected them when not supported by satisfactory evidence. They had been forewarned that false prophets should arise, and deliver their own fancies in the name of the Lord: and, while they were thus put upon their guard, they were furnished with rules to assist them in distinguishing a true from a pretended revelation, (Deut. xviii. 15—22.) We have a proof that the antient Jews exercised a spirit of discrimination in this matter, at a period indeed later than that to which we refer, in their conduct with respect to the apocryphal books: for, although they were written by men of their own nation, and assumed the names of the most eminent personages—Solomon, Daniel, Ezra, and Baruch—yet they rejected them as human compositions, and left the *infallible* church to mistake them for divine. The testimony, then, of the Jews, who without a dissenting voice have asserted the inspiration of the historical books, authorizes us to receive them as a part of the oracles of God, which were committed to their care.” *

The historical books are of very great importance for the right understanding of some other parts of the Old Testament: those portions, in particular, which treat on the life and reign of David, furnish a very instructive key to many of his psalms; and the prophetic books derive much light from these histories. But the attention of the sacred writers was not wholly confined to the Jewish people: they have given us many valuable, though incidental, notices concerning the state of the surrounding nations; and the value of these notices is very materially enhanced by the consideration, that, until the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the two latest Jewish historians, little or no dependence can be placed upon the relations of heathen writers †. But these books are to be considered not merely as a history of the Jewish church: they also clearly illustrate the proceedings of God towards the chil-

* Dick's Essay on the Inspiration of the Scriptures, pp. 184. 186.

† Herodotus and Thucydides, the two most antient profane historians extant, were contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah, and could not write with any certainty of events much before their own time. Bishop Stillingfleet has admirably proved the obscurity, defects, and uncertainty of all antient history in the first book of his *Origines Sacrae*, pp. 1—65, 8th edit. folio.

dren of men, and form a perpetual comment on the declaration of the royal sage, that "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people," (Prov. xiv. 34.) While they exhibit a mournful but impartial view of the depravity of the human heart, and thus prove that "man is very far gone from original righteousness;" they at the same time show "the faithfulness of God to his promises, the certain destruction of his enemies, and his willingness to extend mercy to the returning penitent. They manifest also the excellency of true religion, and its tendency to promote happiness in this life, as well as in that which is to come: and they furnish us with many prophetic declarations, the striking fulfilment of which is every way calculated to strengthen our faith in the word of God."

SECTION II.

ON THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

I. *Author and genuineness of this book.* — II. *Argument.* — III. *Scope.* — IV. *Synopsis of its contents.* — V. *Observations on the Book of Jasher mentioned in Josh. x. 13.*

I. **THE** book of Joshua, which in all the copies of the Old Testament immediately follows the Pentateuch, is thus denominated, because it contains a narration of the achievements of Joshua the son of Nun, who had been the minister of Moses, and succeeded him in the command of the children of Israel: but by whom this book was written is a question concerning which learned men are by no means agreed. From the absence of Chaldee words, and others of a later date, some are of opinion, not only that the book is of very great antiquity, but also that it was composed by Joshua himself. Of this opinion were several of the fathers, and the Talmudical writers, and, among the moderns, Gerhard, Diodati, Huet, Bishops Patrick and Tomline, and Dr. Gray, who ground their hypothesis principally upon the following arguments.

1. Joshua is said (ch. xxiv. 26.) to have written the transactions there recorded, "*in the book of the Law of God,*" so that the book which bears his name forms a continuation of the book of Deuteronomy, the two last chapters of which they think were written by Joshua. But, if we examine the context of the passage just cited, we shall find that it refers, not to the entire book, but solely to the renewal of the covenant with Jehovah by the Israelites.

2. In the passage (ch. xxiv. 29, *et seq.*) where the death and burial of Joshua are related, the style differs from the rest of the book, in the same manner as the style of Deut. xxxiii. and xxxiv. varies, in which the decease and burial of Moses are recorded: and Joshua is here called, as Moses is in Deuteronomy, *the servant of God*, which plainly proves that this passage was added by a later hand.

3. The author intimates (v. 1.) that he was one of those who passed into Canaan.

4. The whole book savours of the law of Moses, which is a strong argument in favour of its having been written by Joshua, the particular servant of Moses.

The last three of these arguments are by no means destitute of weight, but they are opposed by others which show that the book, as we now have it, was not coeval with the transactions it records. Thus, we read in Josh. xv. 63. that the children of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, “*but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.*” Now this joint occupation of Jerusalem by these two classes of inhabitants did not take place till after Joshua’s death, when the children of Judah took that city, (Jud. i. 8). though the Jebusites continued to keep possession of the strong-hold of Zion, whence they were not finally expelled until the reign of David, (2 Sam. v. 6—8). The statement in Josh. iv. 9, (that the stones set up as a memorial of the passage of the Israelites over Jordan are standing *to this day*), was evidently added by some later writer. The same remark will apply to Josh. xv. 13—19, compared with Judg. i. 10—15. Josh. xvi. 10. with Judg. i. 29. and to Josh. xix. 47, collated with Judg. xviii. 29. Since, then, it appears from internal evidence that the book was not written by Joshua himself, the question recurs again, by whom was the book composed or compiled? Dr. Lightfoot ascribes it to Phinehas; Calvin thinks their conjecture most probable, who refer the writing of this book, or at least the compilation of the history, to the high priest Eleazar, (whose death is recorded in the very last verse of the book); because it was the high priest’s duty not only to teach the people orally, but also by writing to instruct posterity in the ways of God *. Henry, as we have already seen †, ascribes it to Jeremiah; and Van Til, to Samuel ‡. But, by whatever prophet or inspired writer this book was composed,

* Calvin, Proleg. in Jos. op. tom. i. *in fine*. This great reformer, however, leaves the question undetermined, as being at most conjectural and uncertain.

† See p. 57, *supra*.

‡ Opus Analyticum, vol. i. p. 410.

it is evident from comparing Josh. xv. 63. with 2 Sam. v. 6—8. that it was written before the seventh year of David's reign.

Further, if the book of Judges were not written later than the beginning of Saul's reign, as some eminent critics are disposed to think, or later than the seventh year of David's reign, which is the opinion of others,—the book of Joshua must necessarily have been written *before* one or other of those dates, because the author of the book of Judges not only repeats some things verbatim from Joshua *, and slightly touches upon others which derive illustration from it †; but also in two several instances (Judg. i. 1 and 2. 6—8) commences his narrative from the death of Joshua, which was related in the close of the preceding Book. If the book of Joshua had not been previously extant, the author of Judges would have begun his history from the occupation and division of the land of Canaan, which was suitable to his design in writing that book.

Whoever was the author of the book of Joshua, it is manifest that it was compiled from antient, authentic, and contemporary documents. The example of Moses, indeed, who committed to writing the transactions of his own time, leads us to expect that some continuation would necessarily be made, not only to narrate the signal fulfilment of those promises, which had been given to the patriarchs, but also to preserve an account of the division of the land of Canaan among the particular tribes, as a record for future ages; and thus prevent disputes and civil wars, which in process of time might rise between powerful and rival tribes. This remark is corroborated by express testimony: for in Josh. xviii. we not only read that the great captain of the Israelites caused a survey of the land to be made and *described* in a book, but in xxiv. 25. the author relates that Joshua committed to writing an account of the renewal of the covenant with God; whence it is justly inferred that the other transactions of this period were preserved in some authentic and contemporaneous document or commentary.—Further, without some such document, the author of this book could not have specified the limits of each tribe with so much minuteness, nor have related with accuracy the discourses of Caleb (Josh. xiv. 6—12);—neither could he have correctly related the discourses of Phinehas and the delegates who accompanied him, to the tribes beyond Jordan (Josh. xxii. 18—20), nor the discourses of the tribes themselves (xxii. 21—30), nor

* Judg. ii. 6—9. is repeated from Josh. xxiv. 28—31. and Judg. i. 29. from Josh. xvi. 10.

† Thus Judg. i. 10—15. 20. derives light from Josh. xv.

of Joshua (xxiii. and xxiv): nor could he have so arranged the whole, as to be in perfect harmony with the law of Moses. Lastly, without a contemporaneous and authentic document, the author would not have expressed himself, as in ch. v. 1. as if he had been present in the transactions which he has related, nor would he have written, as he has done in vi. 26. that “she dwelleth in Israel *unto this day*”: and this document he has expressly cited in x. 13. by the title of the ‘*Book of Jasher*’ or of the upright.

Equally clear is it that the author of this book has made his extracts from authentic documents with religious fidelity, and consequently is worthy of credit: for,

In the first place, he has *literally* copied the speeches of Caleb, Phinehas, of the tribes beyond Jordan, and of Joshua, and in other passages has so closely followed his authority, as to write in v. 1. “*until we were passed over*,” and in vi. 25. that Rahab “dwelleth in Israel *unto this day*.” Hence also, the tribes are not mentioned in the geographical order in which their respective territories were situate, but according to the order pursued in the original document—namely, according to the order in which they received their tracts of land by lot, (Josh. xv. xvi. xviii. xix). Lastly, in conformity to his original document, the author has made no honourable mention of Joshua until after his death; whence it is highly probable that the commentary from which this book was compiled, was originally written by Joshua himself.

Secondly, this book was received as authentic by the Jews in that age when the original commentary was extant, and the author’s fidelity could be subjected to the test of examination: and,

Thirdly, several of the transactions related in the book of Joshua are recorded by other sacred writers with little or no material variations; thus, we find the conquest and division of Canaan, mentioned by Asaph (Psal. lxxviii. 53—65. compared with Psal. xlv. 2—4); the slaughter of the Canaanites by David (Psal. lxviii. 13—15); the division of the waters of Jordan (Psal. cxiv. 1—5. lxvi. 5, 6. Habak. iii. 8); the terrible tempest of hail-stones after the slaughter of the southern Canaanites (Hab. iii. 11—13. compared with Josh. x. 9—11); and the setting up of the tabernacle at Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1). in the books of Judges (xviii. 31.) and Samuel (1 Sam. i. 3. 9. 24, and iii. 21).

Lastly, every thing related in the book of Joshua not only accurately corresponds with the age in which that hero lived, but is further confirmed by the traditions current among hea-

then nations, some of which have been preserved by antient and profane historians of undoubted character *. Thus there are antient monuments extant, which prove that the Carthaginians were a colony of Tyrians who escaped from Joshua; as also that the inhabitants of Leptis in Africa came originally from the Sidonians, who abandoned their country on account of the calamities with which it was overwhelmed †. The fable of the Phenician Hercules originated in the history of Joshua‡; and the overthrow of Og the king of Bashan, and of the Anakims who were called giants, is considered as having given rise to the fable of the overthrow of the giants §. The tempest of hail-stones mentioned in Josh. x. 11. was transformed by the poets into a tempest of stones, with which (they pretend) Jupiter overwhelmed the enemies of Hercules in Arim, which is exactly the country where Joshua fought with the children of Anak ||.

The Samaritans are by some writers supposed to have received the book of Joshua, but this opinion appears to have originated in mistake. They have indeed two books extant, bearing the name of Joshua, which differ very materially from our Hebrew copies. One of these is a chronicle of events from Adam to the year of the Hijra 898, corresponding with A. D. 1492 ††: and the other is a similar chronicle badly compiled, from the death of Moses to the death of Alexander Severus. It consists of forty-seven chapters, filled with fabulous accounts, written in the Arabic language, but in Samaritan characters. ‡‡

II. The book of Joshua comprises the history of about seventeen years, or, according to some chronologers, of twenty-seven or thirty years: it is one of the most important documents in

* See particularly Justin, lib. xxxvi. c. 2. and Tacitus, Hist. lib. v. cc. 2, 3. On the contradictions between the sacred and profane historians, see Vol. I. pp. 478—484, *supra*.

† Allix's Reflections upon the Books of the Old Testament, chap. ii. (Bishop Watson's Collection of Theological Tracts, vol. i. p. 354.)

‡ Procopius (Vandal. lib. ii. c. 10). cites a Phenician inscription; containing a passage, which he has translated into Greek, to the following purport—"We are they who flee from the face of Jesus (the Greek name of Joshua) the robber, the son of Nave." Suidas cites the inscription thus—"We are the Canaanites whom Jesus the robber expelled." The difference between these two writers is not material, and may be accounted for by the same passage being differently rendered by different translators, or being quoted from memory—no unusual occurrence among profane writers,

§ Polybius, Frag. cxiv. Sallust. Bell. Jugurthin. c. xxii.

|| Allix's Reflections, *ut supra*. Huet, Demonstratio Evangelica, vol. i. pp. 273—282. Amstel. 1680, 8vo. Some learned men have supposed that the poetical fable of Phæton was founded on the miracle of the sun standing still (Josh. x. 12—14); but, on a calm investigation of the supposed resemblance, there does not appear to be any foundation for such an opinion.

†† Jahn, Introd. in Vet. Fæd. p. 246, note.

‡‡ Ibid. Fabricii Codex Apocryphus Veteris Testamenti, p. 876, *et seq.*

the old covenant; and it should never be separated from the Pentateuch, of which it is at once both the continuation and the completion. The Pentateuch contains a history of the acts of the great Jewish legislator, and the laws upon which the Jewish church was to be established: and the book of Joshua relates the history of Israel under the command and government of Joshua, the conquest of Canaan, and its subsequent division among the Israelites; together with the provision made for the settlement and establishment of the Jewish church in that country.

III. From this view of the argument of Joshua, we may easily perceive that the scope of the inspired writer of this book was, to demonstrate the faithfulness of God, in the perfect accomplishment of all his often-repeated promises to the patriarchs, that their posterity should obtain possession of the land of Canaan. At the same time we behold the divine power and mercy signally displayed in cherishing, protecting, and defending his people, amid all the trials and difficulties to which they were exposed; and as the land of Canaan is in the New Testament considered as a type of heaven, the conflicts and trials of the Israelites have been considered as adumbrating the spiritual conflicts of believers in every age of the church. Although Joshua, whose piety, courage, and disinterested integrity, are conspicuous throughout his whole history, is not expressly mentioned in the New Testament as a type of the Messiah, yet he is universally allowed to have been a very eminent one. He bore our Saviour's name; the Alexandrian version, giving his name a Greek termination, uniformly calls him *Ἰησοῦς*—Jesus; which appellation is also given to him in Acts vii. 45. and Heb. iv. 8. Joshua saved the people of God (as the Israelites are emphatically styled in the Scriptures) from the Canaanites: Jesus Christ saves his people from their sins (Matt. i. 21).

IV. The book of Joshua may be conveniently divided into three parts or sections: viz.

SECT. 1. The history of the occupation of Canaan* by the Israelites, (cc. i.—xii.) comprising the call and appointment of Joshua to be captain-general of that people (i.); the sending out of the spies to bring an account of the city of Jericho (ii.); the miraculous passage of the Israelites over Jordan (iii.), and the setting up of twelve memorial stones (iv.); the circumcision of the Israelites, and their celebration of the first pass-

* On the objections which have been brought against the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, see Vol. I. pp. 472, 473, *supra*.

over in the land of Canaan; the appearance of the "captain of the Lord's host" to Joshua (v.); the capture of Jericho (vi.) and of Ai (vii. viii.); the politic confederacy of the Gibeonites with the children of Israel (ix.); the war with the Canaanitish kings, and the miracle of the sun standing still (x.); the defeat of Jabin and his confederates (xi.); a summary recapitulation of the conquests of the Israelites both under Moses (xii. 1—6.) and also under Joshua himself (xii. 7—24.)

SECT. 2. The division of the conquered land: containing,

(i.) A general division of Canaan, (xiii.)

(ii.) A particular apportionment of it among the Israelites, including the portion of Caleb (xiv.); the lot of Judah (xv.); of Ephraim (xvi.); of Manasseh (xvii.); of Benjamin (xviii.); and of the six tribes of Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, Dan, and of Joshua himself (xix.); the appointment of the cities of refuge (xx.), and of the Levitical cities (xxi.); the dismissal, from the camp of Israel, of the militia of the two tribes and a half who settled on the other side of Jordan, their consequent return, and the transactions resulting from the altar which they erected on the borders of Jordan in token of their communion with the children of Israel (xxii.)

SECT. 3. The assembling of the people (xxii.); the dying address and counsels of Joshua (xxiv. 1—28.); his death and burial, &c. (xxiv. 29—33).

"It is, however, necessary to remark, that there is some accidental derangement of the order of the chapters in this book, occasioned probably by the antient mode of rolling up manuscripts. If chronologically placed, they should be read thus:—first chapter, to the tenth verse; then the second chapter; then from the tenth verse to the end of the first chapter; after should follow the third and consecutive chapters, to the eleventh; then the twenty-second chapter; and lastly, the twelfth and thirteenth chapters to the twenty-fourth verse of the latter." *

V. A considerable difference of opinion subsists among learned men, concerning the *book of Jasher*, mentioned in Josh. x. 13. The Targum expounds it of the *book of the law*; but some have conjectured that it is the same with the book of Judges: because we there find mention of the sun's standing

* Bedford's Scripture Chronology, book v. p. 590. Dr. Gray's Key, p. 147.

still. Josephus* was of opinion, that it was composed of certain records (kept in a safe place at that time, and afterwards deposited in the temple), which contained an account of what happened to the Jews from year to year, and particularly of the sun's standing still, and also directions for the *use of the bow*, (see 2 Sam. i. 18.) that is, directions for instituting archery, and maintaining military exercises. So that this book was not the work of an inspired person, but of some historiographer who wrote the annals of his own time, and, from the authenticity and fidelity of his narrative, received the appellation of *Jasher*, or the upright. But the most probable conjecture is that of Bishop Lowth, who thinks it was a poetical book, no longer extant when the author of Judges and Samuel lived and wrote. †

* Antiq. Jud. lib. v. c. 2.

† The book of Jasher is twice quoted, *first* in Josh. x. 13. where the quotation is evidently poetical, and forms exactly three distiches.

“ Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon,
And thou moon, in the valley of Ajalon:
And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed her course,
Until the people were avenged of their enemies.
And the sun tarried in the midst of the heavens,
And hasted not to go down in a whole day.”

The second passage where the book of Jasher is cited, is in 2 Sam. i. 18. where David's lamentation over Saul is said to be extracted from it. The custom of the Hebrews, in giving titles to their books from the initial word is well known: thus Genesis is called *Bere-shith*, &c. They also sometimes named the book from some remarkable word in the first sentence; thus the book of Numbers is sometimes called *Bemidbar*. We also find in their writings canticles which had been produced on important occasions, introduced by some form of this kind: *az jashar*, (then sang) or *ve-jashar peloni*, &c. Thus *az jashir Mosheh*, “ then sang Moses,” (Exod. xv. 1. the Samaritan Pentateuch reads *jasher*); *ve-thashar Deborah*, “ and Deborah sang.” (Judg. v. 1. See also the inscription of Psal. xviii). Thus, the book of Jasher is supposed to have been some collection of sacred songs, composed at different times and on different occasions, and and to have had this title, because the book itself and most of the songs began in general with this word, *ve-jashar*. Lowth's Prelect. pp. 306, 307, notes; or Dr. Gregory's Translation, vol. ii. pp. 152, 153, notes.

SECTION III.

ON THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

I. *Title*; — II. *Date and author*; — III. *Scope, chronology, and synopsis of its contents*; — IV. *Observations on some difficult passages in this book.*

I. **THE** book of Judges derives its name from its containing the history of the Israelites, from the death of Joshua to the time of Eli, under the administration of thirteen Judges, and consequently before the establishment of the regal government. These Judges were men of heroic spirit, raised up by God out of the several tribes to govern the people, and to deliver them from those actual and imminent dangers, which, by their sins against God, they had brought upon themselves. The Judges frequently acted by a divine suggestion, and were endowed with preternatural strength and fortitude, (compare ii. 18. vi. 14. 34. xi. 29. and xiv. 6. 19.): it is necessary to bear this in mind when perusing the relation of some of their achievements, which were justifiable only on the supposition of their being performed under the sanction of a divine warrant, which supersedes all general rules of conduct.

II. From the expression recorded in Judg. xviii. 30, some have imagined that this book was not written till after the Babylonish captivity, but this conjecture is evidently erroneous; for, on comparing Psal. lxxviii. 60, 61. and 1 Sam. iv. 11. with that passage, we find that the captivity intended by the historian was a particular captivity of the inhabitants of Dan, which took place about the time the ark was taken by the Philistines. Besides, the total absence of Chaldee words sufficiently proves the date of the book of Judges to have been many centuries anterior to the great Babylonish captivity. This book, however, was certainly written before the second book of Samuel, (compare 2 Sam. xi. 21. with Judg. ix. 53.) and before the capture of Jerusalem by David. (Compare 2 Sam. v. 6. with Judg. i. 21.)

There is a considerable diversity of opinion as to the person by whom this book of Judges was written; it being, by some writers, ascribed to Phinehas, Hezekiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or Ezra, who compiled it from the memoirs of his own time which were left by each Judge; while others think that it was compiled by some prophet out of the public registers or records that were kept by the priests and Levites. But the best

founded opinion seems to be, that it was written by the prophet Samuel, the last of the Judges; and in this opinion the Jews themselves coincide.

III. The book of Judges comprises the history of about three hundred years: it consists of three parts; the first embraces the history of the Elders, who ruled the Israelites after the death of Joshua, and the subsequent transactions, to the commencement of their troubles, (ch. i.—iii. 5). The second part contains the history of the Judges from Othniel to Eli, (ch. iii. 5—xvi.); and the third, which narrates several memorable actions performed not long after the death of Joshua, (ch. xvii.—xxi.) is thrown to the end of the book, that it might not interrupt the thread of the narrative. “This history,” observes Dr. Priestley, “abundantly verifies the frequent warnings and predictions of Moses; according to which, the people, being under the immediate government of God, were in the most exemplary manner to be rewarded for their obedience, and punished for their disobedience, and especially for their conformity to the religions of their neighbours, whom God had devoted to destruction on account of their polytheism and idolatry.” There is considerable difficulty in settling the chronology of this book, several of the facts related in it being reckoned from different æras, which cannot now be exactly ascertained; many of the Judges also are generally supposed to have been successive who in all probability were contemporaries, and ruled over different districts at the same time. In the following synopsis it is attempted to reduce the chronology to something like order, and also to present a correct analysis of the book.

SECT. 1. The state of the Israelites after the death of Joshua, until they began to turn aside from serving the Lord. (i.—iii. 5.) B. c. 1443—1413.

SECT. 2. The history of the oppressions of the Israelites, and their deliverances by the Judges (iii. 5.—xvi).

§ i. The subjection of the Eastern Israelites to the king of Mesopotamia, and their deliverance by Othniel (iii. 5—11.) B. c. 1413—1405.

§ ii. The subjection of the Eastern Israelites to the king of Moab, and their deliverance by Ehud. The Western Israelites delivered by Shamgar (iii. 11—31.) B. c. 1343—1305.

§ iii. The Northern Israelites, after being oppressed by Jabin, king of Canaan, are delivered by Deborah and Barak (iv.) The thanksgiving song of Deborah and Barak (v.) B. c. 1285.

§ iv. The Eastern and Northern Israelites, being for their sins delivered into the power of Midian, are delivered by Gideon. History of Gideon and his family, including the judicature of Abimelech (vi.—ix.) B. c. 1252—1233.

§ v. History of the administrations of Tola and Jair. The Israelites, being oppressed by the Ammonites, are delivered by Jephthah. The administrations of the Judges Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (x.—xii.) B. c. 1233—1157.

§ vi. The birth of Sampson.—Servitude of the Israelites to the Philistines, and their deliverance by Sampson, with an account of his death (xiii.—xvi.) B. c. 1155—1117.

SECT. 3. Account of the introduction of idolatry among the Israelites, and the consequent corruption of religion and manners among them; for which God gave them up into the hands of their enemies (xvii.—xxi.)

§ i. Account of the idol of Micah and its idolatrous worship, at first privately in his family (xvii.) and afterwards publicly in the tribe of Dan (xviii.) B. c. 1413.

§ ii. Account of a very singular violence and detestable murder, committed by the Benjamites of Gibeah (xix.); the war of the other tribes with them, and the almost total extinction of the tribe of Benjamin. (xx. xxi.) B. c. 1413.

IV. The book of Judges forms an important link in the history of the Israelites, and is very properly inserted between the books of Joshua and Samuel, as the Judges were the intermediate governors between Joshua and the kings of Israel. It “furnishes us with a lively description of a fluctuating and unsettled nation; a striking picture of the disorders and dangers which prevailed in a republic without magistracy; when ‘the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through by-ways,’ (v. 6.); when few prophets were appointed to control the people, and ‘every one did that which was right in his own eyes’ (xvii. 6.) It exhibits the contest of true religion with superstition; displays the beneficial effects that flow from the former, and represents the miseries and evil consequences of impiety. From the scenes of civil discord and violence which darken this history, Saint Paul has presented us with some illustrious examples of faith, in the characters of Gideon, Ba-

rak, Sampson, and Jephthah.” * Independently of the internal evidences of its authenticity which are to be found in the style of this book, the transactions it records are not only cited or alluded to by other sacred writers besides Saint Paul †, but are further confirmed by the traditions current among the heathen writers. Thus, we find the memorial of Gideon’s actions preserved by Sanchoniatho, a Tyrian writer who lived soon after him, and whose antiquity is attested by Porphyry, who was perhaps the most inveterate enemy to Christianity that ever lived ‡. The Vulpinaria, or feast of the foxes, celebrated by the Romans in the month of April, (the time of the Jewish harvest, in which they let loose foxes with torches fastened to their tails) §, was derived from the story of Sampson, which was conveyed into Italy by the Phœnicians: and, to mention no more, in the history of Sampson and Dalilah we find the original of Nisus and his daughters, who cut off those fatal hairs, upon which the victory depended ||.

* Dr. Gray’s Key, p. 157.

† Compare Psal. lxxviii. 56—66. lxxxii. 11, 12. cvi. 34—46. 1 Sam. xii. 9—11. 2 Sam. xi. 21. Isa. ix. 4. and x. 26.

‡ He expressly affirms Sanchoniatho to have derived many of the facts related in his history, *ἐκ τῶν υπομνημάτων Ιερυμβαλου*, from the Memoirs of Jerumbalus, or Jerubbaal, another name for Gideon. Bocharti Phaleg. lib. ii. c. vii.

§ Ovid, Fasti, lib. iv. v. 684, *et seq.*

|| Ovid, Metam. lib. viii. fab. i.

SECTION IV.

ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

- I. *Title and argument*;—II. *Chronology*;—III. *Author*;—IV. *Scope*; V. *Synopsis of its contents.*

I. THE book of Ruth is generally considered as an appendix to that of Judges, and an introduction to that of Samuel: it is therefore placed, and with great propriety, between the books of Judges and Samuel. In the antient Jewish canon of the Old Testament *, Judges and Ruth formed but one book; although the modern Jews separate it from both, and make it the second of the five Megilloth or volumes which they place toge-

* Jerome (Prolog. Galeat.) expressly states that this was the case in his time; and Eusebius, when giving Origen’s catalogue of the sacred books, confirms his account. Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. c. 25.

ther towards the end of the Old Testament*. It is publicly read by them in the synagogues on the feast of weeks or of Pentecost, on account of the harvest being mentioned in it, the first-fruits of which were offered to God on that festival. This book derives its name from Ruth the Moabitess, whose history it relates, and whom the Chaldee paraphrast supposes to have been the daughter of Eglon king of Moab: but this conjecture is utterly unsupported by Scripture, nor is it at all likely that a king's daughter would abandon her native country, to seek bread in another land, and marry a stranger.

II. Augustine† refers the time of this history to the regal government of the Israelites; Josephus the Jewish historian, and some others of later date, to the time of Eli; Moldenhawer, after some Jewish writers, assigns it to the time of Ehud: Rabbi Kimchi and other Jewish authors conceive Boaz, who married Ruth, to have been the same person as Ibzan, who judged Israel immediately after Jephthah; Junius, comparing the book of Ruth with Matt. i. is of opinion, that the events recorded in this history took place in the days of Deborah; and the learned Archbishop Usher, that they happened in the time of Shamgar. As the famine, which caused Elimelech to leave his country, “came to pass in the days when the Judges ruled,” (Ruth i. 1.); Bishop Patrick has referred the beginning of this history to the judicature of Gideon, about the year of the world 2759, at which time a famine is related to have happened (Judg. vi. 3—6.)‡ Considerable difficulty has arisen in settling the chronology of this book, in consequence of its being mentioned by Saint Matthew (i. 5, 6.) that Salmon the father of Boaz (who married Ruth) was married to Rahab, (by whom is generally understood Rahab the harlot, who protected the spies when Joshua invaded the land of Canaan); and yet that Boaz was the grandfather of David, who was born about three hundred and sixty years after the siege of Jericho — a length of time, during which it is difficult to conceive that only three persons, Boaz, Obed, and Jesse, should have intervened between Rahab and David. But this difficulty may readily be solved, either by supposing that some intermediate names of little consequence were omitted in the public genealogies copied by the evangelist, (as we know to have been the case in some other

* See p. note of this volume.

† De Doct. Christ. lib. ii. cap. 8.

‡ Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. v. c. 9. § 1. Seder Olam, c. xii. Moldenhawer, Introd. ad. Libros canonicos Vet. et Nov. Test. p. 43. Kimchi on Ruth, c. i. Junius, Annotat. in Ruth, i. Bishop Patrick on Ruth, i. 1. Leusden, Philol. Heb. pp. 18. 86.

instances); or by concluding with Archbishop Usher, that the ancestors of David, being men of extraordinary piety, or designed to be conspicuous because the Messiah was to descend from them, were blessed with longer life and greater strength than ordinarily fell to the lot of men in that age*. It is certain that Jesse was accounted an old man, when his son David was but a youth, (see 1 Sam. xvii. 12.): and, since Boaz is represented as the great grandfather of the royal psalmist, it is evident that the date of the history of Ruth cannot be so low as the time of Eli assigned by Josephus, nor so high as the time of Shamgar: the most probable period therefore is that stated by Bishop Patrick, viz. during the judicature of Gideon, or about the year of the world 2759, B. c. 1241.

III. Like the book of Judges, Ruth has been ascribed to Hezekiah, and also to Ezra: but the most probable, and indeed generally received opinion, is that of the Jews, who state it to have been written by the prophet Samuel: from the genealogy recorded in iv. 17—22. it is evident that this history could not have been reduced into its present form before the time of Samuel.

IV. The scope of this book is, principally, to delineate part of Christ's genealogy in David's time. (Compare Ruth iv. 18—22. with Matt. i. 5, 6.) It had been foretold to the Jews that the Messiah should be of the tribe of Judah, and it was *afterwards* further revealed that he should be of the family of David: and therefore it was necessary, for the full understanding of these prophecies, that the history of the family, in that tribe, should be written *before* these prophecies were revealed, to prevent the least suspicion of fraud or design. And thus this book, these prophecies, and their accomplishment, serve to illustrate each other†. The adoption of Ruth, a heathen converted to Judaism, into the line of Christ, has generally been considered as a pre-intimation of the admission of the Gentiles into the church. A further design of this book is to evidence the care of Divine Providence over those who sincerely fear God, in raising the pious Ruth from a state of the deepest adversity to that of the highest prosperity. The whole narrative is written with peculiar simplicity; and the interviews between Boaz and Ruth display the most unaffected piety, liberality, and modesty; and their reverent observance of the Mosaic law, as well as of antient customs, is portrayed in very lively and animated colours.

* Chronologia Sacra, pars i. c. xii. pp. 69, 70. ed. Geneva, 1722, folio.

† Bedford's Scripture Chronology, book v. c. 5.

V. The book of Ruth, which consists of four chapters, may be conveniently divided into three sections; containing,

SECT. 1. An account of Naomi, from her departure from Canaan into Moab, with her husband Elimelech, to her return thence into the land of Israel with her daughter-in-law Ruth, (ch. i.) B. C. 1241—1231.

SECT. 2. The interview of Boaz with Ruth, and their marriage, (ii. iii. iv. 1—12).

SECT. 3. The birth of Obed, the son of Boaz by Ruth, from whom David was descended, (iv. 13—18).

SECTION V.

ON THE TWO BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

I. *Title*; — II. *Authors*; — III. *Argument, Scope, and Analysis of the First Book of Samuel*; — IV. *Argument, Scope, and Analysis of the Second Book of Samuel*; — V. *General Observations on these two Books.*

I. IN the Jewish canon of Scripture these two books form but one, termed in Hebrew the Book of Samuel, probably because the greater part of the first book was written by that prophet, whose history and transactions it relates. The books of Samuel appear to have derived their appellation from 1 Chron. xxix. 29: where the transactions of David's reign are said to be "written in the book (Heb. *words*) of Samuel the seer." In the Septuagint version they are called the first and second Book of Kings, or of the Kingdoms; in the Vulgate they are designated as the first and second Book of Kings, and, by Jerome, they are termed the Books of the Kingdoms; as being two of the four books in which the history of the kings of Israel and Judah is related.

II. Jahn is of opinion, that the books of Samuel and the two books of Kings were written by one and the same person, and published about the forty-fourth year of the Babylonish captivity: and he has endeavoured to support his conjecture with much ingenuity, though unsuccessfully, by the uniformity of plan and style which he thinks are discernible in these books. The more prevalent, as well as more probable opinion, is that of the Talmudists, which was adopted by the most learned fathers of the Christian church (who unquestionably had better means of ascertaining this point than we have): viz. that the

first twenty-four chapters of the first book of Samuel were written by the prophet whose name they bear; and that the remainder of that book, together with the whole of the second book, was committed to writing by the prophets Gad and Nathan, agreeably to the practice of the prophets who wrote memoirs of the transactions of their respective times. That all these three persons were writers, is evident from 1 Chron. xxix. 29; where it is said: "Now the acts of David, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and of Gad the seer:" the memoirs of these prophets are here referred to as distinct books; but it would be natural for Ezra, by whom the canon of Jewish Scripture was completed, to throw all their contents into the two books of Samuel. It is certain that the first book of Samuel was written before the first book of Kings; a circumstance related in the former book being referred to in the latter (1 Sam. ii. 31. with 1 Kings ii. 17).

The *first* acts of David, declared in 1 Chron. xxix. 29. to have been recorded by Samuel, were such as happened before the death of Samuel: and these end with the twenty-fourth chapter of the first book of Samuel. What parts of the remaining history of David were written by Nathan, and what by Gad, it is at present very difficult to distinguish with exactness. Mr. Reeves has conjectured, with great probability, that as it appears from 1 Sam. xxii. 5, that Gad was then with David in the hold or place where he kept himself secret from Saul; and since it is thought that Gad, being bred under Samuel, was privy to his having anointed David king, and had therefore resolved to accompany him during his troubles; it has, from these circumstances, been supposed that the history of what happened to David, from the death of Samuel to his being made king at Hebron over all Israel, was penned by the prophet Gad. He seems the most proper person for that undertaking, having been an eye-witness to most of the transactions. This part of David's history takes up the seven last chapters of the first book of Samuel, and the four first chapters and the former part of the fifth chapter of the second book.

The first mention of the prophet Nathan occurs in 2 Sam. vii. 2, a short time after David was settled at Jerusalem. Nathan is frequently mentioned in the subsequent part of David's reign; and he was one of those who were appointed by David to assist at the anointing of Solomon, (1 Kings i. 32). As this event took place not long before David's death, it is probable Nathan might survive the royal psalmist: and, as he knew all the transactions of his reign from his settlement at Jerusalem to

his death, it is most likely that he wrote the history of the latter part of David's reign; especially as there is no mention of Gad, after the pestilence sent for David's numbering the people, which was about two years before his death, during which interval Gad might have died. Gad must have been advanced in years, and might leave the continuation of the national memoirs to Nathan. For these reasons, it is probably thought that Nathan wrote all the remaining chapters of the second book of Samuel, after the five first. *

III. The FIRST BOOK of Samuel contains the history of the Jewish church and polity, from the birth of Samuel, during the judicature of Eli, to the death of Saul the first king of Israel; a period of nearly eighty years, viz. from the year of the world 2869 to 2949. Its scope is more immediately to declare the religious and political state of the Israelites under their last judges Eli and Samuel, and their first monarch Saul, and the reason why their form of government was changed from an aristocracy to a monarchy; thus affording a strong confirmation of the authenticity of the Pentateuch, in which we find that this change had been foretold by Moses, in his prophetic declaration to the assembled nation, a short time before his death, and upwards of four hundred years before the actual institution of the regal government. This book also exhibits the preservation of the church of God amidst all the vicissitudes of the Israelitish polity, and its transmission to posterity; together with signal instances of the divine mercy towards those who feared Jehovah, and of judgments inflicted upon his enemies. It consists of three parts or sections.

SECT. 1. The transactions under the judicature of Eli, (ch. i—iv).

§ 1. The birth of Samuel (ch. i), with the thanksgiving and prophetic hymn of his mother Hannah (ii). The tenth verse of this chapter is a prediction of the Messiah. "This admirable hymn excels in simplicity of composition, closeness of connexion, and uniformity of sentiment; breathing the pious effusions of a devout mind, deeply impressed with a conviction of God's mercies to herself in particular, and of his providential government of the world in general; exalting the poor in spirit or the humble minded, and abasing the rich and arrogant; rewarding the righteous, and punishing the wicked." †

* Reeves, Preface to 1 Sam.

† Dr. Hales, Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book i. p. 332.

§ 2. The call of Samuel, his denunciations against Eli by the command of God, and his establishment in the prophetic office (iii).

§ 3. The death of Eli, and the capture of the ark of God by the Philistines (iv).

SECT. 2. The history of the Israelites during the judicature of Samuel.

§ 1. The destruction of the Philistines' idol Dagon (v); the chastisement of the Philistines, their restoration of the ark, and the slaughter of the Bethshemites for profanely looking into the ark (vi).

§ 2. The reformation of divine worship, and repentance of the Israelites at Mizpeh, the discomfiture of the Philistines, who were kept under during the remainder of Samuel's judicature (vii).

§ 3. The Israelites' request for a regal government; the destination of Saul to the kingly office (viii. ix); his inauguration (x); and victory over the Ammonites.

§ 4. Samuel's resignation of the supreme judicial power (xii); though, in a civil and religious capacity, he "judged Israel all the days of his life," (1 Sam. vii. 15).

SECT. 3. The history of Saul, and the transactions during his reign.

§ 1. The prosperous part of Saul's reign, comprising his war with the Philistines, and offering of sacrifice (xiii), with his victory over them (xiv).

§ 2. The rejection of Saul from the kingdom, in consequence of his rebellion against the divine command in sparing the king of Amalek, and the best part of the spoil, (xv).

§ 3. The inauguration of David, and the events that took place before the death of Saul, (xvi—xxviii), including,

i. The anointing of David to be king over Israel, (xvi); his combat and victory over Goliath, (xvii).

ii. The persecutions of David by Saul;—his exile and covenant with Jonathan, (xviii); his flight, (xix); friendship with Jonathan, (xx); his going to Nob, where he and his men ate of the shewbread, and Goliath's sword was delivered to him; his flight, first to the court of Achish king of Gath, and subsequently into the land of Moab, (xxi. xxii. 1—6); the slaughter of the priests at Nob, with the exception of Abiathar, (xxii. 7—23).

iii. The liberation of Keilah from the Philistines by David, (xxiii. 1—6); his flight into the wildernesses of Ziph and Maon (xxiii. 7—29); Saul's life in David's power at Engedi, who spares it (xxiv); the inhuman conduct of Nabal (xxv);—Saul's life spared a second time (xxvi);—David's second flight to Achish king of Gath (xxvii).

§ 4. The last acts of Saul to his death.

i. Saul's consultation of the * witch of Endor (xxviii).

ii. The encampment of the Philistines at Aphek, who send back David from their army (xxix).

iii. David's pursuit and defeat of the Amalekites who had plundered Ziklag, and from whom he recovers the spoil (xxx).

iv. The suicide of Saul, and total discomfiture of the Israelites (xxxi).

IV. The SECOND BOOK of Samuel contains the history of David, the second king of Israel, during a period of nearly forty years, viz. from the year of the world 2948 to 2988; and, by recording the translation of the kingdom from the tribe of Benjamin to that of Judah, it relates the partial accomplishment of the prediction delivered in Gen. xlix. 10. The victories of David, his wise administration of civil government, his efforts to promote true religion, his grievous sins, and deep repentance, together with the various troubles and judgments inflicted upon him and his people by God, are all fully describ-

* Few passages of Scripture have been discussed with more warmth than the relation contained in this 28th chapter of the first book of Samuel: some commentators have conjectured that the whole was a juggle of the Pythoness whom Saul consulted; others, that it was a mere visionary scene; Augustine and others, that it was Satan himself who assumed the appearance of Samuel; and others, that it was the ghost of Samuel, raised by infernal power, or by force of magical incantation. All these hypotheses however contradict the *historical fact* as related by the author of this book: for it is evident from the Hebrew original of 1 Sam. xxxviii. 14. more closely translated, and compared throughout with itself, that it was 'Samuel himself' whom Saul beheld, and who (or his spirit) was actually raised immediately, and before the witch had any time to utter any incantations, by the power of God, in a glorified form, and wearing the appearance of the ominous mantle in which was the rent that signified the rending of the kingdom from Saul's family. The *reality* of Samuel's appearance on this occasion was a doctrine of the primitive Jewish church. (Compare Ecclus. xlvi. 20), and was also thus understood by Josephus, who has not only translated the original passage correctly, but likewise expressly states that the soul of Samuel inquired why it was raised. Antiq. Jud. lib. vi. c. 14. § 2. Dr. Hales' Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book i. pp. 355—360. where the subject is fully discussed and proved. See also Calmet's Dissertation sur l'Apparition de Samuel, Commentaire Litteral, tom. ii. pp. 331—336. That it was Samuel himself is further evident from the clearness and truth of the prediction (which could only come from God): for, 'on the morrow', that is, very shortly after, Saul and his sons were slain.

ed. His heinous sins and sincere repentance, says Augustine, are both propounded, in order that, at the falls of such great men, others may tremble, and know what to avoid; and that, at their rising again, those who have fallen may know what to follow and imitate: though many will fall with David who will not rise with David*. This book consists of three principal divisions, relating the triumphs and the troubles of David, and his transactions subsequent to his recovery of the throne, whence he was driven for a short time by the rebellion of his son Absalom.

SECT. 1. The triumphs of David (ch. i—x).

§ 1. His elegant, tender, and pathetic elegy over Saul and Jonathan (i).

§ 2. His triumph over the house of Saul, and confirmation in the kingdom (ii—iv).

§ 3. His victories over the Jebusites and Philistines (v), the bringing up of the ark to Jerusalem (vi). David's prayer to God on that occasion, and the divine promises made to him (vii); which, though they primarily related to the establishment of the throne in his posterity, yet ultimately prefigured the everlasting kingdom of the Messiah. (Compare vii. 12—16. with Heb. i. 5).

§ 4. His victories over the Philistines, Ammonites, and other neighbouring nations (viii—x).

SECT. 2. The troubles of David, and their cause, together with his repentance, and subsequent recovery of the divine favour (ch. xi—xxiv).

§. 1. The cause of David's troubles — his *first great* offence against God — his sin in the matter of Uriah, and the divine judgments denounced against him on that account (xi. xii).

§. 2. The punishments in consequence of that sin, first, from domestic troubles in the sin of Ammon (xiii); and, secondly, public troubles, in the rebellion of Absalom, which, for a short time, exiled David from the throne (xiv—xv—xvii); the death of Absalom (xviii); and David's mourning on his account (xix).

SECT. 3. David's restoration to his throne, and subsequent transactions (ch. xx—xxiv).

§ 1. David's return to Jerusalem, and the insurrection of Sheba quelled (xx).

* Augustine, Enarrat. in Psalm. 50, (51 of our version).

§ 2. His punishment of the sons of Saul, and successful battles with the Philistines (xxi).

§ 3. His psalm of praise, on a general review of the mercies of his life, and the many and wonderful deliverances which he had experienced (xxii). This divine ode, which contains the noblest images perhaps that were ever expressed in words, also occurs in the book of Psalms (Psal. xviii.) with a few variations. We have it *here*, as originally composed for his own closet and his own harp; but *there* we have it as delivered to the chief musician for the service of the church, with some amendments. For, though primarily calculated for the royal prophet's immediate use, yet it might indifferently assist the devotion of others, when giving thanks for their deliverances: or, it was intended that his people should thus join with him in his thanksgivings; because, being a public person, his deliverances were to be accounted public blessings, and called for public acknowledgments.

§ 4. The last words of David, forming a supplement or conclusion to the preceding sublime hymn (xxiii. 1—7), which are followed by an enumeration of his mighty men (xxiii. 8).

§ 5. David's *second* great offence against God, in numbering the people; its punishment; David's penitential intercession and sacrifice (xxiv). *

V. This second book of Samuel bears an exact relation to the preceding, and is likewise connected with that which succeeds. We see throughout the effects of that enmity against other nations, which had been implanted in the minds of the Israelites by the Mosaic law, and which gradually tended to the extirpation of idolatry. "This book, likewise, as well as the former, contains other intrinsic proofs of its verity. By describing without disguise the misconduct of those characters, who were highly revered among the people, the sacred writer demonstrates his impartial sincerity: and, by appealing

* The offence of David seems to have chiefly consisted in his persisting to require a muster of all his subjects able to bear arms, without the divine command, without necessity, in a time of profound peace, to indulge an idle *vanity* and *presumption*, as if he put his trust more in the number of his subjects than in the divine protection; and the offence of his people might also have been similar, always elated, as they were, and provoking the anger of the Lord in prosperity, by their forgetfulness of him. Deut. vi. 10—12. Dr. Hales, Analysis, vol. ii. p. 386.

to monuments that attested the veracity of his relations when he wrote, he furnished every possible evidence of his faithful adherence to truth. The books of Samuel connect the chain of sacred history by detailing the circumstances of an interesting period. They describe the reformation and improvements of the Jewish church established by David: and, as they delineate minutely the life of that monarch, they point out his typical relation to Christ. Many heathen authors have borrowed from the books of Samuel, or have collected from other sources many particulars of those accounts which he gives *." In the falls of David we behold the strength and prevalence of human corruption; and in his repentance and recovery, the extent and efficacy of divine grace.

The two books of Samuel are of very considerable importance for illustrating the book of Psalms, to which they may be considered as a key. Thus, Psalm iii. will derive much light from 2 Sam. xv. 14, *et seq.*;—Psalm iv. from 1 Sam. xxii. xxiii. xxvi.;—Psalm vii. from 2 Sam. xvi. 5. 11;—Psalm xxiv. from 2 Sam. vi. 12, *et seq.*;—Psalm xxx. from 1 Sam. v. 11;—Psalm xxxii. and li. from 2 Sam. xii.;—Psalm xxxiv. from 2 Sam. xxi. 10—15;—Psalm xxxv. from 2 Sam. xv—xvii.;—Psalm xlii. and xliii. from 2 Sam. xvii. 22—24;—Psalm lii. from 1 Sam. xxii. 9;—Psalm liv. from 1 Sam. xxiii. 19, and xxvi. 1;—Psalm lv. from 2 Sam. xvii. 21, 22.;—Psalm lvi. from 1 Sam. xxi. 11—15;—Psalm lvii. from 1 Sam. xxii. 1. and xxiv. 3:—Psalm lix. from 1 Sam. xix. 11. Psalm lx. from 2 Sam. viii. 3—13, and x. 15—19;—Psalm lxiii. from 1 Sam. xxii. 5. and xxiii. 14—16;—Psalm lxviii. from 2 Sam. vi. 3—12;—Psalm lxxxix. from 2 Sam. vii. 12, *et seq.*; and Psalm cxlii. from 1 Sam. xxii. 1, and xxiv. 1, *et seq.*

* Dr. Gray's Key, p. 181.

SECTION VI.

ON THE TWO BOOKS OF KINGS.

- I. *Title and order of these books*; — II. *Author*; — III. *Argument and synopsis of the First Book of Kings*; — IV. *Argument and synopsis of the Second Book of Kings*; — V. *General observations on these books.*

I. **T**HE two books of Kings are closely connected with those of Samuel. The origin and gradual increase of the united kingdom of Israel, under Saul and his successor David, having been described in the latter, the books now under consideration relate its height of glory under Solomon, its division into two kingdoms under his son and successor Rehoboam, the causes of that division, and the consequent decline of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, until their final subversion; the ten tribes being carried captive into Assyria by Shalmanezar, and Judah and Benjamin to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. In the Jewish canon these books constitute but one volume, termed *Melakim* or *Kings*, having been divided at some unknown period into two parts for the convenience of reading. In the Septuagint and Vulgate copies they are termed the third and fourth book of Kings.

II. Concerning the author or authors of these books, the sentiments of learned men are extremely divided. Some have been of opinion that David, Solomon, and Hezekiah wrote the history of their own reigns: others, that Nathan, Gad, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets who flourished in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, undertook the office of historiographers. We know that several of the prophets wrote the lives of those kings who reigned in their times: for the names and writings of these prophets are mentioned in several places of the books of Kings and Chronicles; which also cite or refer to the original annals of the kings of Israel and Judah, of which those books have transmitted to us abridgments or summaries. Thus, in 1 Kings xi. 41, we read of the *acts of Solomon*, which acts were recorded in “the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer,” (2 Chron. ix. 29); which Iddo was employed, in conjunction with Shemaiah the prophet, in writing the acts of Rehoboam, (2 Chron. xii. 15.) We also read of the book of Jehu the prophet, relating the transactions of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xx. 34. 1 Kings xvi. 1). And Isaiah the prophet wrote the acts of king Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 22), and also of Hezekiah (2 Chron.

xxxii. 32.) and it is highly probable that he wrote the history of the two intermediate kings Jotham and Ahaz, in whose reigns he lived (Isa. i. 1.)

It is evident therefore that two descriptions of writers were concerned in the composition of the books of Kings:—*First*, those original, primitive, and contemporary authors, who wrote the annals, journals, and memoirs of their own times, from which the authors of our sacred history subsequently derived their materials. These antient memoirs have not descended to us: but they unquestionably were in the hands of those sacred penmen, whose writings are in our possession, since they cite them and refer to them. The *second* class of writers consists of those, by whom the books of Kings were actually composed in the form in which we now have them. The Jews ascribe them to Jeremiah; and their opinion has been adopted by Grotius and other eminent commentators: others again assign them to the prophet Isaiah. But the most probable opinion is, that these books were digested into their present order by Ezra. The following are the grounds on which this opinion is founded and supported:—

1. The general uniformity of style and manner indicates that these books were written by one person.

2. The author evidently lived after the captivity of Babylon: for, at the end of the second book of Kings, he speaks of the return from the captivity (2 Kings xxv. 22, &c.)

3. He says that in his time the ten tribes were still captive in Assyria, whither they had been carried as a punishment for their sins.

4. In the seventeenth chapter of the second book of Kings, he introduces some reflections on the calamities of Judah and Israel, which demonstrate that he wrote after those calamities had taken place.

5. He almost every where refers to the antient memoirs which he had before him, and abridged.

6. The author appears to have been a priest, and greatly attached to the house of David.

Now, all these marks correspond with Ezra, a learned priest, who lived both during and subsequently to the captivity, and might have collected numerous documents, which, from the lapse of time and the persecutions of the Jews, are now lost to us. Such are the reasons on which Calmet has ascribed the books of Kings to Ezra, and his opinion is generally received. There are however a few circumstances that seem to militate against this hypothesis, which should be noticed, as not agreeing with the time of Ezra. Thus, in 1 Kings viii. 8, the ark

of the covenant is represented as being in the temple “to this day:” and in 1 Kings xii. 19. the kingdoms of Israel are mentioned as still subsisting. In 1 Kings vi. 1. 37, 38, the author mentions the months of Zif and Bul, names which were not in use after the captivity. Lastly, the writer expresses himself throughout as a contemporary, and as an author who had been an eye-witness of what he wrote. But these apparent contradictions admit of an easy solution. Ezra generally transcribes verbatim the memoirs which he had in his possession, without attempting to reconcile them *. This clearly demonstrates his fidelity, exactness, and integrity. In other places some reflections or illustrations are inserted, which naturally arise from his subject; this shows him to have been fully master of the matter he was discussing, and that, being divinely inspired, he was not afraid of intermixing his own words with those of the prophets, whose writings lay before him.

The divine authority of these books is attested by the many predictions they contain: they are cited as authentic and canonical by Jesus Christ (Luke iv. 25—27), and by his apostles (Acts vii. 47. Rom. xi. 2—4. James v. 17, 18), and they have constantly been received into the sacred canon by the Jewish and Christian churches in every age. Their truth and authenticity derive additional confirmation from the corresponding testimonies of antient profane writers. †

III. The FIRST BOOK OF KINGS embraces a period of one hundred and twenty-six years, from the anointing of Solomon and his admission as a partner in the throne with David, A. M. 2989 to the death of Jehoshaphat, A. M. 3115. It relates the latter part of David’s life; his death, and the accession of Solomon, whose reign comprehended the most prosperous and glorious period of the Israelitish history; and prefigured the peaceful reign of the Messiah; Solomon’s erection and consecration of the temple at Jerusalem, (the beauty and perfection of which was a type of the beauty and perfection of the church of God):

* The consideration that these books were digested from memoirs written by different persons who lived in the respective times of which they wrote, will help to reconcile what is said of Hezekiah in 2 Kings xviii. 5, that *after him none was like him of all the kings of Judah*, with what is said of Josiah in chap. xxiii. 25. that, *like unto him was there no king before him*; for, what is said of Hezekiah was true, till the eighteenth year of Josiah, when that pious sovereign began the reformation of which so much is said in the sacred history. Mr. Reeves, Pref. to Books of Kings.

† Josephus, Antiq. Jud. lib. viii. c. 2. Eusebius, Prep. Evang. lib. x. Grotius de Veritate, lib. iii. c. 16. and Allix, Reflections upon the Books of the Old Testament, chap. ii. have collected several instances of the confirmation of the sacred historians from profane authors.

his awful defection from the true religion: the sudden decay of the Jewish nation after his death, when it was divided into two kingdoms—under Rehoboam who reigned over the kingdom of Judah comprizing the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and under Jeroboam who was sovereign of the other ten tribes that revolted from the house of David, and in the sacred writings are designated as the kingdom of Israel; the reigns of Rehoboam's successors, Abijam, Asa, and Jehoshaphat; and those of Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Tibni, the wicked Ahab, and Ahaziah (in part), who succeeded Jeroboam in the throne of Israel. For the particular order of succession of these monarchs, and of the prophets who flourished during their respective reigns, the reader is referred to the chronological table inserted in the Appendix to this work. The first book of Kings may be divided into two principal parts, 1. containing the history of the undivided kingdom under Solomon and, 2. the history of the divided kingdom under Rehoboam and his successors, and Jeroboam and his successors.

SECT. 1. The history of Solomon's reign (ch. i—x.) contains a narrative of,

- § 1. The latter days of David; the inauguration of Solomon as his associate in the kingdom, and his designation to be his successor (i. ii. 1—12).
- § 2. The reign of Solomon from the death of David to his undertaking the erection of the temple (ii. 12—46. iii. iv).
- § 3. The preparations for building the temple (v).
- § 4. The building of the temple (vi.) and of Solomon's own house, together with the preparation of the vessels and utensils for the temple service (vii).
- § 5. The dedication of the temple, and the sublime prayer of Solomon on that occasion (viii).
- § 6. Transactions during the remainder of Solomon's reign;—his commerce; visit from the queen of Sheba; the splendour of his monarchy; his falling into idolatry, and the adversaries by whom he was opposed until his death (ix. x. xi).

SECT. 2. The history of the two kingdoms of Israel (ch. xi—xxii.)

- § 1. The accession of Rehoboam, and division of the two kingdoms (xi).
- § 2. The reigns of Rehoboam king of Judah, and of Jeroboam I. king of Israel (xii—xiv).
- § 3. The reigns of Abijam and Asa kings of Judah, and the contemporary reigns of Nadab, Baasha, Elah,

Zimri, Omri, and the commencement of Ahab's reign (xv. xvi).

- § 4. The reign of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and of his contemporaries Ahab and Ahaziah (in part) during which the prophet Elisha flourished; (xvii—xxii).

IV. The SECOND BOOK OF KINGS continues the contemporary history of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, from the death of Jehoshaphat, A. M. 3115 to the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, A. M. 3416, a period of three hundred years. The three last verses of the preceding book have been improperly disjoined from this. The history of the two kingdoms is interwoven in this book, and presents a long succession of wicked sovereigns in the kingdom of Israel, from Ahaziah to Hoshea, in whose reign Samaria was captured by Shalmanezzer king of Assyria, and the ten tribes were taken captive into that country. In the kingdom of Judah, we find some few pious princes among many who were corrupt. Sixteen sovereigns filled the Jewish throne, from Jehoram to Zedekiah, in whose reign the kingdom of Judah was totally subverted, and the people carried into captivity, to Babylon. During this period numerous prophets flourished, as Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Joel, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Daniel, Ezekiel, &c. The second book of Kings comprises twenty-five chapters, which may be divided into two parts: 1. containing the history of the two monarchies, until the end of the kingdom of Israel; and, 2. the history of Judah alone to its subversion.

SECT. 1. The contemporary history of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, to the end of the former (ch. i—xvii).

- § 1. The contemporary reigns of Jehoshaphat, and of his associate Jehoram, kings of Judah, and of Ahaziah and Joram kings of Israel; the translation of Elijah, and designation of Elisha to be his successor in the prophetic office; miracles wrought by him (i—viii. 2).

- § 2. The contemporary reigns of Jehoram king of Judah alone, and his successor Ahaziah, and of Jehoram king of Israel (viii. 3—29).

- § 3. Jehu appointed king over Israel; Jehoram put to death by him; the reign of Jehu; death of Ahaziah king of Judah, and the usurpation of Athaliah (ix. x. xi. 1—3).

- § 4. The reign of Jehoash, king of Judah, and the contemporary reigns of Jehoahaz and his son Jehoash

kings of Israel; the death of the prophet Elisha; and the miracle performed at his grave (xi. 4—21. xii. xiii).

§ 5. The reigns of Amaziah, Azariah or Uzziah, and Jotham, kings of Judah; and the contemporary reigns of Jehoash or Joash, Jeroboam II., Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah and Pekah, (xiv. xv).

§ 6. The reign of Ahaz king of Judah; interregnum in the kingdom of Israel after the death of Pekah terminated by Hoshea the last sovereign, in the ninth year of whose reign Samaria his capital was taken by the king of Assyria, whither the ten tribes were taken into captivity; the subversion of the kingdom of Judah; and the mixture of religion introduced by the Cuthites who were transplanted to Samaria (xvi. xvii).

SECT. 2. The history of the decline and fall of the kingdom of Judah (ch. xviii—xxv).

§ 1. The reign of Hezekiah; his war with the Assyrians; their army destroyed by a plague; the recovery of Hezekiah from a mortal disease; the Babylonish captivity foretold; his death (xviii. xix. xx).

§ 2. The reigns of Amon and Manasseh (xxi).

§ 3. The reign of Josiah (xxii. xxiii. 1—30).

§ 4. The reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah the last king of Judah; Jerusalem taken; the temple burnt; and the Jews carried into captivity, to Babylon (xxiii. 31—37. xxiv. xxv).

V. The two books of Kings, particularly the second, abound with impressive and lively narrations; and the strict impartiality, with which the author of each book has related events and circumstances dishonourable to his nation, affords a convincing evidence of his fidelity and integrity. They delineate the long-suffering of God towards his people, and his severe chastisements for their iniquitous abuse of his mercy: at the same time they mark most clearly the veracity of God, both in his promises and in his threatenings, and show the utter vanity of trusting in an arm of flesh, and the instability of human kingdoms, from which piety and justice are banished. *

* In the first volume of Bishop Watson's Collection of Tracts (pp. 134—138), there are some admirable reflections on the moral causes of the Babylonish captivity, and the propriety of that dispensation, which will amply repay the trouble of perusal.

SECTION VII.

ON THE BOOKS OF CHRONICLES.

I. *Title*; — II. *Author and date*; — III. *Scope and analysis of the two books of Chronicles*; — IV. *Observations on them*.

I. **THE** Jews comprize the two books of Chronicles in one book, which they call *Dibre Hajamim*, that is, *The Words of Days*, probably from the circumstance of their being compiled out of diaries or annals, in which were recorded the various events related in these books. In the Septuagint version they are termed Παραλειπομένα, (*paralipomena*), or *Things omitted*; because many things which were omitted in the former part of the sacred history are here not only supplied, but some narrations also are enlarged, while others are added. The appellation of Chronicles was given to these books by Jerome, because they contain an abstract, in order of time, of the whole of the sacred history, to the time when they were written.

II. These books were evidently compiled from others, which were written at different times, some before and others after the Babylonish captivity: it is most certain that the books of Chronicles are not the original records or memorials of the transactions of the sovereigns of Israel and Judah, which are so often referred to in the book of Kings. Those antient registers were much more copious than the books of Chronicles, which contain ample extracts from original documents, to which they very frequently refer.

Concerning the author of these books we have no distinct information. Some have conjectured that he was the same who wrote the books of Kings; but the great difference, Calmet remarks*, in the dates, narratives, genealogies, and proper names,—together with the repetitions of the same things, and frequently in the same words,—strongly militates against this hypothesis. The Hebrews commonly assign the Chronicles to Ezra; who, they say, composed them after the return from the captivity, and was assisted in this work by the prophets Zechariah and Haggai, who were then living. This opinion they endeavour to support, *first*, from the similarity of style, (the last three verses of the second book of Chronicles correspond-

* Comment. Litteral, tom. iii. pp. i—iv.

ing very nearly with the first three verses of Ezra), from the recapitulations and general reflections which are sometimes made on a long series of events:—*secondly*, the author lived after the captivity, since in the last chapter of the second book he recites the decree of Cyrus, which granted liberty to the Jews, and he also continues the genealogy of David to Zerubbabel, the chief of those who returned from the captivity:—*thirdly*, these books contain certain terms and expressions, which they think are peculiar to the person and times of Ezra.

However plausible these observations may be, there are other marks discernible in the books of Chronicles, which tend to prove that Ezra did not compose them. In the first place, the author continues the genealogy of Zerubbabel to the twelfth generation: but Ezra did not live to that time, and consequently could not have written the genealogy in question.

Secondly, the writer of these books was neither a contemporary nor an original writer; but compiled and abridged them from antient memoirs, genealogies, annals, registers, and other works which he frequently quotes, and from which he sometimes gives copious extracts, without changing the words, or attempting to reconcile inconsistencies. It is evident therefore that the author of these books lived after the captivity, and derived his materials from the memoirs of writers contemporary with the events recorded, and who flourished long before his time. The authenticity of these books is abundantly supported by the general mass of external evidence; by which also their divine authority is fully established, as well as by the indirect attestations of our Lord and his apostles.*

III. The principal scope of these books is, to exhibit with accuracy the genealogies, the rank, the functions, and the order of the priests and Levites; that, after the captivity, they might more easily assume their proper ranks, and re-enter on their ministry. The author had further in view, to show how the lands had been distributed among the families before the captivity, so that the respective tribes might on their return obtain, as far as was practicable, the antient inheritance of their fathers. He cites old records by the name of “antient things,” (1 Chron. iv. 22), and recites four several rolls or numberings of the people;—one taken in the time of David, a second in the time of Jeroboam, a third in the time of Jotham, and the fourth in the time of the captivity of the ten

* Compare 1 Chron. xxiv. 10. with Luke i. 5.; 2 Chron. ix 1. with Matt. xii. 42. and Luke xi. 31.; and 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21. with Matt. xxiii. 35. and Luke xi. 51.

tribes. In other places he speaks of the numbers, which had been taken by order of king David, but which Joab did not finish. Hence we may perceive the extreme accuracy affected by the Jews in their historical documents and genealogies: the latter indeed could not be corrupted *formerly*, (for most of the people could repeat them memoriter); although, from frequent transcription, much confusion has been introduced into many of the names, which it is now perhaps impossible to clear up. It is, however, most evident that the basis of the books of Chronicles was a real history and real genealogies: “for such particulars of names and other circumstances would never have been invented by any person, as no imaginable purpose could be answered by it; and the hazard of making mistakes, and being thereby exposed when they were first published, would be very great*.” The Chronicles are an abridgment of all the sacred history, but more especially from the origin of the Jewish nation to their return from the first captivity. The FIRST BOOK traces the rise and propagation of the people of Israel from Adam, and afterwards gives a circumstantial account of the reign and transactions of David. In the SECOND BOOK the narrative is continued, and relates the progress and dissolution of the kingdom of Judah, to the very year of the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity: as very little notice is taken of the kings of Israel, it is not improbable that this book was chiefly extracted from the records of the kingdom of Judah. The period of time embraced in the books of Chronicles is about 3468 years; they may be commodiously divided into four parts, viz.—1. The genealogies of those persons through whom the Messiah was to descend, from Adam to the captivity, and to the time of Ezra;—2. The histories of Saul and David;—3. The history of the united kingdoms of Israel and Judah under Solomon; and, 4. The history of the kingdom of Judah after the secession of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, to its utter subversion by Nebuchadnezzar.

PART 1. Genealogical tables from Adam to the time of Ezra, (1 Chron. i.—ix).

SECT. 1. Genealogies of the patriarchs from Adam to Jacob, and of the descendants of Judah to David, and his posterity to Zerubbabel, from whom the Messiah was to descend, (1 Chron. i.—iii).

SECT. 2. Genealogies of other descendants of Judah by

* Dr. Priestley, Notes on Scripture, vol. ii. p .

Pharez, and of the remaining eleven sons of Jacob, (iv—viii. ix. 1).

SECT. 3. Genealogies of the first inhabitants of Jerusalem, after their return from the Babylonish captivity, (ix. 2—34).

This long series of genealogies is a signal testimony to the origin and preservation of the Jewish church among mankind; and of the fulfilment of the divine promises to Abraham, that his seed should be multiplied as the sand upon the sea-shore, (Gen. xxii. 17). These genealogies are also of very great importance, as exhibiting “the detail of the sacred line, through which the promise of the Messiah was transmitted:” so that, when in the fulness of time this promised Mediator was revealed in the flesh, the church and people of God might infallibly know that this was that very promised seed of the woman, the son of Abraham and the son of David. In perusing the Hebrew genealogies, it will be necessary to remember that the terms ‘*father*,’ ‘*son*,’ ‘*begat*,’ and ‘*begotten*,’ which are of such frequent occurrence in them, do not always denote immediate procreation or filiation, but extend to any distant progenitor.*

PART 2. The histories of Saul and David, (1 Chron. ix. 35—44. x—xxix).

SECT. 1. The pedigree of Saul, and his death, (1 Chron. ix. 35—44. x).

SECT 2. The history and transactions of the reign of David; including,

- § i. His inauguration; list of his worthies, and account of his forces, (xi. xii).
- § ii. The bringing up of the ark from Kirjath-jearim, first to the house of Obed-edom, and thence to Jerusalem; and the solemn service and thanksgiving on that occasion, (xiii—xvi). David’s intention of building a temple approved of by Jehovah, (xvii).
- § iii. The victories of David over the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, and Edomites (xviii); and over the Ammonites, Syrians, and Philistines, (xix. xx).
- § iv. David takes a census of the people; a plague inflicted, which is stayed at his intercession, (xxi. 1—27).

* Thus, in Gen. xxix. 5. Laban is called the *son* of Nahor, though in fact he was only his ‘*grandson*’ by Bethuel. Similar instances are often to be found in the Scriptures.

§ v. An account of David's regulations for the constant service of the temple:—His preparations and directions concerning the building of it (xxi. 27—30. xxii. xxiii. 1); regulations concerning the Levites, (xxiii. 2—32.) the priests, (xxiv.) singers, (xxv.) and porters or keepers of the gates, (xxvi.)

§ vi. Regulations for the administration of his kingdom; list of his military and civil officers, (xxvii.)

§ vii. David's address to Solomon and his princes concerning the building of the temple (xxviii); the liberal contributions of David and his subjects for this purpose, and his thanksgiving for them, (xxix. 1—22).

PART 3. The history of the united kingdom of Israel and Judah under Solomon, (1 Chron. xxix. 23—30. 2 Chron. i—ix).

SECT. 1. The second inauguration of Solomon:—Death of David; the piety, wisdom, and grandeur of Solomon, (1 Chron. xxix. 23—30. 2 Chron. i).

SECT 2. Account of the erection and consecration of the temple, and of some other edifices erected by him, (2 Chron. ii—viii. 16).

SECT. 3. The remainder of Solomon's reign to his death, (viii. 17, 18. ix).

PART 4. The history of the kingdom of Judah, from the secession of the ten tribes, under Jeroboam, to its termination by Nebuchadnezzar, (2 Chron. x—xxxvi).

SECT. 1. The accession of Rehoboam to the throne of the united kingdom; its division; Jerusalem plundered by Shishak, (2 Chron. x—xii).

SECT. 2. The reigns of Abijah and Asa kings of Judah, (xiii—xvi).

SECT. 3. The reign of Jehoshaphat, (xvii—xx).

SECT. 4. The reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah; the usurpation of Athaliah, (xxi. xxii).

SECT. 5. The reigns of Amaziah, Uzziah, and Jotham, (xxv—xxvii).

SECT. 6. The reign of Ahaz, (xxviii.)

SECT. 7. The reign of Hezekiah, (xxix—xxxii).

SECT. 8. The reigns of Manasseh and Amon, (xxxiii).

SECT. 9. The reign of Josiah, (xxxiv. xxxv).

SECT. 10. The reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin,

and Zedekiah; the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple, (xxxvi.) *

IV. Independently of the important moral and religious instruction to be derived from the two books of Chronicles, as illustrating the divine dispensations towards his highly favoured but ungrateful people, the second book is extremely valuable in a critical point of view; not only as it contains some historical particulars which are not mentioned in any other part of the Old Testament, but also as it affords us many genuine readings, which by the inaccuracy of transcribers are now lost in the older books of the Bible. The discrepancies between the books of Kings and Chronicles, though very numerous, are not of any great moment, and admit of an easy solution, being partly caused by various lections, and partly arising from the nature of the books; which, being supplementary to those of Samuel and Kings, omit what is there related more at large, and supply what is there wanting†. It should further be recollected, that, *after*, the captivity, the Hebrew language was slightly varied from what it had formerly been; that different places had received new names, or undergone sundry vicissitudes; that certain things were now better known to the returned Jews under other appellations, than under those by which they had formerly been distinguished; and that, from the materials to which the author had access, (and which frequently were different from those consulted by the writers of the royal histories), he has selected those passages which appeared to him best adapted to his purpose, and most suitable to the time in which he wrote. It must also be considered, that he often elucidates obscure and ambiguous words in former books by a different mode of spelling them, or by a

* The two last verses of the book of Chronicles are evidently the beginning of the book of Ezra, which follows next in the order of the canon; and must have been copied from it before the transcriber was aware of his error: but, finding his mistake, he abruptly broke off, and began the book of Ezra at the customary distance, without publishing his error by erasing or blotting out those lines which he had inadvertently subjoined to the book of Chronicles. This copy, however, being in other respects of authority, has been followed in all subsequent copies, as well as in all the antient versions. This circumstance affords a proof of the scrupulous exactness with which the copies of the canonical books were afterwards taken. No writer or translator would take upon himself to correct even a manifest error. How then can we think that any other alteration, diminution, or addition, would voluntarily be made by any of the Jewish nation, or not have been detected if it had been attempted by any person. Dr. Kennicott, Diss. i. pp. 491—494. Dr. Priestley, Notes on Scripture, vol. ii. p. 94.

† The above remark will be clearly illustrated by comparing 2 Kings xxiv. 6. with 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6. and Jer. xxxvi. 30.; 1 Kings xv. 2. with 2 Chron. xv. 19.; 1 Kings xxii. 44. with 2 Chron. xvii. 6.; 2 Kings ix. 27. with 2 Chron. xxii. 9.

different order of the words employed, even when he does not use a distinct phraseology of narration, which he sometimes adopts. *

As the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles relate the same histories, they should each be constantly read and collated together; not only for the purpose of obtaining a more comprehensive view of Jewish history, but also in order to illustrate or amend from one book what is obscure in either of the others. †

* Calmet's Dictionary, article *Chronicles*, in fine.

† Compare 1 Chron. xxi. 16. with 2 Sam. xxiv. 17.; 1 Chron. xxi. 1. with 2 Sam. xxiv. 1.; 2 Sam. vi. 2. with 1 Chron. xiii. 6.; 2 Sam. xxi. 19. with 1 Chron. xx. 5.; 1 Chron. xi. 20. with 2 Sam. xxiii. 18.; and 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. with 1 Chron. xi. 22.

SECTION VIII.

ON THE BOOK OF EZRA.

I. *Title and author*; — II. *Argument, scope, and synopsis of its contents*; III. *Observations on a spurious passage ascribed to Ezra*.

I. **T**HE books of Ezra and Nehemiah were antiently reckoned by the Jews as one volume, and were divided by them into the first and second books of Ezra. The same division is recognized by the Greek and Latin churches: but the third book assigned to Ezra, and received as canonical by the Greek church, is the same, in substance, as the book which properly bears his name, but interpolated. And the *fourth* book, which has been attributed to him, is a manifest forgery, in which the marks of falsehood are plainly discernible, and which was never unanimously received as canonical either by the Greek or by the Latin church, although some of the fathers have cited it, and the Latin church has borrowed some words out of it. It is not now extant in Greek, and never was extant in Hebrew.

It is evident that the author of the book of Ezra was personally present at the transactions recorded in it, the narrative being in the first person. It also bears upon the face of it every character of natural simplicity, and contains more particulars of time, persons, and places, than could have been introduced by any other individual. That the last four chapters of this book were written by Ezra himself there can be no doubt, as he particularly describes himself in the beginning of

the seventh chapter, and likewise frequently introduces himself in the subsequent chapters. The Jews, indeed, ascribe the whole of this book to Ezra, and their opinion is adopted by most Christian commentators. But as the writer of the first six chapters appears, from ch. v. 4, to have been at Jerusalem in the reign of Darius Hystaspes, and it is evident from the beginning of the seventh chapter that Ezra did not go thither until the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, (a distance of sixty years)—some persons have ascribed the first six chapters to a more antient author. This, however, does not necessarily follow: and we apprehend it will appear that these chapters were written by Ezra as well as the four last,

In the first place, *from the intimate connexion of the sixth chapter with the seventh*: for the diversity of speech and narration observable in them may readily be accounted for by the circumstance of Ezra's having copied, or extracted from, the authentic memoirs, which he found on his arrival at Jerusalem, of the transactions that had happened since the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity.

Secondly, *the same method of narration prevails in both parts*: for, as in the second part (ch. vii. 12—26.) the royal decree is inserted, entire, in the Chaldee dialect; so, in the first part, the edict of Cyrus, the epistle of the Samaritans to the Pseudo-Smerdis, and his reply to them, together with part of the fourth chapter, are also given in Chaldee.

And lastly, in the third place, it is not likely that a short historical compendium, like the book of Ezra, should be the work of more than one author: nor ought we to assign it to several authors, unless we had either express declarations or internal evidence that they were concerned in it; all these evidences are wanting in the book of Ezra.

This book is written in Chaldee from chapter iv. 8. to chapter vii. 27. As this portion of Ezra chiefly consists of letters, conversations, and decrees, expressed in that language, the fidelity of the historian probably induced him to take down the very words which were used. The people too, having been accustomed to the Chaldee during the captivity, were in all probability better acquainted with it than with the Hebrew; for it appears from Nehemiah's account that they did not all understand the law of Moses as it had been delivered in the original Hebrew tongue.*

II. The book of Ezra harmonizes most strictly with the

* On the Biblical Labours of Ezra, see pp. 5, 6, of this volume.

prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, which it materially elucidates, (compare Ezra v. with Hagg. i. 12. and Zech. iii. iv). It evinces the paternal care of Jehovah over his chosen people, whose history it relates from the time of the edict issued by Cyrus, to the twentieth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus—a period of about seventy-nine, or, according to some chronologers, of one hundred years. This book consists of two principal divisions: the first contains a narrative of the return of the Jews from Babylon under the conduct of Zerubbabel; and the second gives an account of the reformation of religion under Ezra.

PART 1. From the return of the Jews under Zerubbabel to the rebuilding of the temple, (ch. i—vi).

SECT. 1. The edict of Cyrus, permitting the Jews to return into Judea and rebuild the temple;—account of the people who first returned under the conduct of Zerubbabel, and of their offerings towards rebuilding the temple, (i. ii). On this joyous occasion it is probable that the hundred and twenty-sixth psalm was composed.

SECT. 2. The building of the temple commenced, but hindered by the Samaritans, (iii. iv).

SECT. 3. The temple finished in the sixth year of Darius Hystaspes, by the encouragement of the decree issued in the second year of his reign, (v. vi).

PART 2. The arrival of Ezra at Jerusalem, and the reformation made there by him, (vii—x).

SECT. 1. The departure of Ezra from Babylon with a commission from Artaxerxes Longimanus, (vii).

SECT. 2. Account of his retinue and arrival at Jerusalem, (viii).

SECT. 3. Narrative of the reformation effected by him, (ix. x).

The zeal and piety of Ezra appear, in this book, in a most conspicuous point of view: his memory has always been held in the highest reverence by the Jews, who consider him as a second Moses: though not expressly styled a prophet, he wrote under the influence of the Divine Spirit, and the canonical authority of his books has never been disputed. He is said to have died in the hundred and twentieth year of his age, and to have been buried at Jerusalem.

III. In Justin the martyr's conference with Trypho the Jew, there is a very extraordinary passage respecting the typical import of the passover, cited by that father; in which Ezra, in a speech made before the celebration of the passover, expounds the mystery of it as clearly relating to Christ; and which, Justin concludes, was at a very early day expunged

from the Hebrew copies by the Jews, as too manifestly favouring the cause of Christianity. The passage may be thus translated * :—“ *And Ezra said unto the people, THIS PASSEVER is our SAVIOUR and our REFUGE; and if ye shall understand and ponder it in your heart, that we are about to humble HIM in this sign, and afterwards shall believe on HIM, then this place shall not be made desolate for ever, saith the Lord of hosts. But if ye will not believe on HIM, nor hear HIS preaching, ye shall be a laughing-stock to the Gentiles.*” As this passage never existed in the Hebrew copies, and is not now to be found either in them or in any copies of the Septuagint version, it is the opinion of most critics that it originally crept into the Greek Bibles from a marginal addition by some early Christian, rather than that it was expunged from the later copies by the Jews.

* Justin Martyr, *Dial. cum Tryphone*, pp. 292, 293, edit. by Thirlby, or vol. ii. p. 196, ed. Oberthur. Mr. Whitaker (*Origin of Arianism*, p. 305) advocates its genuineness; and concludes that the passage in question originally stood in Ezra vi. 19—22, probably between the 20th and 21st verses. Dr. Grabe, Dr. Thirlby, and after them Dr. Magee, (*Disc. on Atonement*, vol. i. p. 306, note) doubt its genuineness. Dr. A. Clarke is disposed to believe it authentic, (*Disc. on Eucharist*, p. 33).

SECTION IX.

ON THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.

I. *Title and author*; — II. *Argument and synopsis of its contents.*

I. **THE** book of Nehemiah, we have already observed, is in some versions termed the second book of Ezra or Esdras, from an opinion which antiently obtained, and was adopted by Athanasius, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, and other eminent fathers of the church, that Ezra was the author of this book. In the modern Hebrew Bibles it has the name of Nehemiah prefixed to it, which is also retained in our English Bibles. The author of this book was *not* the Nehemiah, who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon with Zerubbabel.

That Nehemiah, whose name this book bears, and who was cup-bearer to Artaxerxes Longimanus, was the author of it, there cannot be any reasonable doubt: the whole of it being written in his name, and, what is very unusual when compared with the preceding sacred historians, being written in the first person. The insertion of the greater part of the register in chap. xii. 1—26. (which is supposed to militate against this generally received opinion), may be accounted for by supposing it either to have been added by some subsequent author, or

perhaps by the authority of the great synagogue: for it seems to be unconnected with the narrative of Nehemiah, and, if genuine, must ascribe to him a degree of longevity which appears scarcely credible. *

II. Nehemiah, according to some writers, was of the tribe of Levi, but, in the opinion of others, of the royal house of Judah: as the office he held in the Persian court (that of cup-bearer) was a post of great honour and influence, it is certain that he was a man of illustrious family; and of his integrity, prudence, and piety, the whole of this book presents abundant evidence. He arrived at Jerusalem thirteen years after Ezra, with the rank of governor of the province, and vested with full power and authority to encourage the rebuilding of the walls of that city, and to promote the welfare of his countrymen in every possible way.

Having governed Judea for twelve years, (Neh. xiii. 6), Nehemiah returned to his royal patron (ii. 6); and after a short absence he obtained permission to return to his country, where he is supposed to have spent the remainder of his life. His book may be conveniently divided into four principal sections, viz.

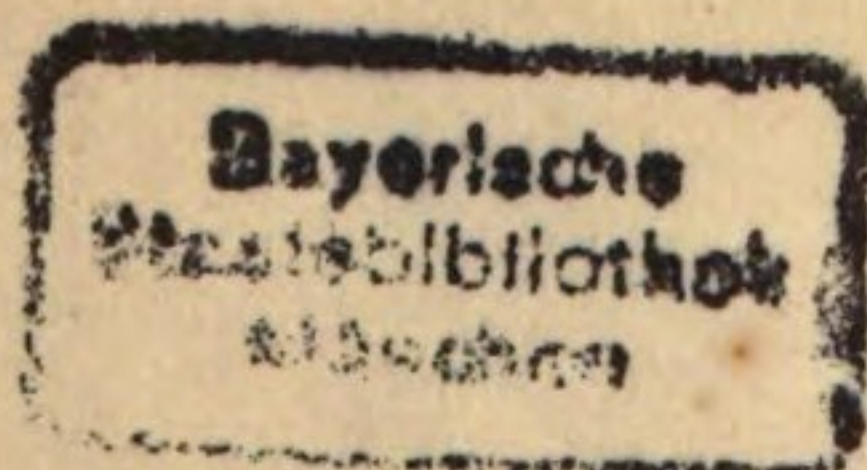
SECT. 1. The departure of Nehemiah from Shushan, with a royal commission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, and his first arrival there, (ch. i. ii. 1—11).

SECT 2. Account of the building of the walls, notwithstanding the obstacles interposed by Sanballat, (ii. 12—20. iii—vii. 4).

SECT. 3. The first reformation accomplished by Nehemiah, containing

- § i. A register of the persons who had first returned from Babylon, and an account of the oblations at the temple, (vii. 5—72).
- § ii. Account of the reading of the law, and the celebration of the feast of tabernacles, (viii).
- § iii. A solemn fast and humiliation kept; and the renewal of the covenant of the Israelites with Jehovah, (ix. x).
- § iv. Lists of those who dwelt at Jerusalem, and of other cities occupied by the Jews that returned; register and succession of the high priests, chief Levites, and principal singers, (xi—xii. 1—26).
- § v. The completion and dedication of the wall, (xii. 27—47).

* Prideaux, Connexion, sub anno 458, vol. i. p. 296, *et seq.* 8th edition.



SECT. 4. The *second* reformation accomplished by Nehemiah on his second return to Jerusalem, and his correction of the abuses which had crept in during his absence, (xiii).

The administration of this pious man and excellent governor lasted about thirty-six years, to the year of the world 3574 according to some chronologers, but Dr. Prideaux has with more probability fixed it to the year 3595. The Scripture history closes with the book of Nehemiah.

SECTION X.

ON THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

I. *Title.* — II. *Author.* — III. *Argument.* — IV. *Synopsis of its contents.*

I. **THIS** book, which derives its name from the person whose history it chiefly relates, is by the Jews termed *Megilloth Esther*, or the volume of Esther. The history it contains comes in between the sixth and seventh chapters of Ezra: its authenticity was questioned by some of the fathers, in consequence of the name of God being omitted throughout, but it has always been received as canonical by the Jews, who hold this book in the highest estimation, placing it on the same level with the law of Moses. They believe that whatever destruction may attend the other sacred writings, the Pentateuch and the book of Esther will always be preserved by a special providence.

II. Concerning the author of this book, the opinions of biblical critics are so greatly divided, that it is difficult to determine by whom it was written. Some ascribe it to the joint labours of the great synagogue, who, from the time of Ezra to Simon the Just, superintended the edition and canon of Scripture. Philo the Jew assigns it to Joachin, the son of Joshua the high priest, who returned with Zerubbabel; others think it was composed by Mordecai; and others, again, attribute it to Esther and Mordecai jointly. The two latter conjectures are grounded on the following declaration in Esther ix. 20. 23.—“And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus; and the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them.” But the context of the passage clearly shows that these words do not relate to the book itself, but to the circular letters which Mordecai sent to

the Jews in all the provinces of the Persian empire, announcing the mighty deliverance from their enemies which had been vouchsafed to them, and instituting a perpetual anniversary in commemoration of such deliverance *. The institution of this festival, and its continued observance to the present time, is a convincing evidence of the reality of the history of Esther, and of the genuineness of the book which bears her name: since it is impossible, and in fact inconceivable, that a nation should institute, and afterwards continue to celebrate, through a long succession of ages, this solemn annual festival, merely because a certain man among them had written an agreeable fable or romance. The transactions here recorded relate to the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus †, the same who reigned during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah; whence Augustine ‡ is of opinion that this book was written by Ezra; which conjecture is perhaps more probable than any that have been offered respecting the author of Esther.

III. The history contained in this book commences about the year of the world 3544, and it continues through a period not exceeding eighteen or twenty years: it relates the elevation of a Jewish captive to the throne of Persia, and the providential deliverance of herself and people from the machinations of the cruel Haman and his confederates, whose designed mischief returned upon themselves; thus affording a practical comment on the declaration of the royal psalmist:—"Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily, he is a God that judgeth in the earth," (Psal. lvi. 11).

* For an account of this festival, called the feast of *Purim*, see Vol. I. p. 159.

† Chronologers are greatly divided in opinion who was the Ahasuerus of the sacred historian. Scaliger, who has been followed by Jahn, has advanced many ingenious arguments to show that it was Xerxes who was intended; Archbishop Usher supposes it to have been Darius the son of Hystaspes. The most probable opinion is that of Dr. Prideaux, (*Connexion*, sub anno 458, vol. i. pp. 270, *et seq.*); who, after a very minute discussion, maintains that the Ahasuerus of Esther was Artaxerxes Longimanus, agreeably to the account of Josephus, (*Antiq. Jud. lib. xi. c. 6.*) of the Septuagint version, and of the apocryphal additions to the book of Esther. The opinion of Prideaux is adopted by the Bishop of Lincoln, Dr. Gray, and the very accurate chronologer Dr. Hales. (See Gray's *Key*, p. 227. Bishop of Lincoln's *Elements*, vol. i. p. 93. Dr. Hales's *Analysis*, vol. ii. book i. pp. 524, *et seq.*) We may therefore conclude, that the permission given to Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem was owing to the influence of Esther and Mordecai, and that the emancipation of the Jews from the Persian yoke was gradually, though silently, effected by the same influence. It is not improbable that the pious reason, assigned by Artaxerxes (*Ezra vii. 23.*) for the regulations given to Ezra, originated in the correct views of Jehovah which were communicated to him by his queen Esther.

‡ *De Civitate Dei*, lib. xviii. c. 36.

IV. The book consists of two parts, detailing

PART 1. The promotion of Esther; and the essential service rendered to the king by Mordecai, in detecting a plot against his life (ch. i. ii).

PART 2. The advancement of Haman; his designs against the Jews, and their frustration.

SECT. 1. The promotion of Haman, and the occasion of which he availed himself to obtain an edict for massacreing the Jews (iii).

SECT. 2. The consequent affliction of the Jews, and the measures pursued by them (iv).

SECT. 3. The defeat of Haman's particular plot against the life of Mordecai (v. vi. vii).

SECT. 4. The defeat of his general plot against the Jews (viii. ix. 1—15).

SECT. 5. The institution of the festival of Purim, to commemorate their deliverance (ix. 16—32); and the advancement of Mordecai (x).

In our copies the book of Esther terminates with the third verse of the tenth chapter: but, in the Greek and Vulgate Bibles, there are ten more verses annexed to it, together with six additional chapters, which the Greek and Romish churches account to be canonical. As, however, they are not extant in Hebrew, they are expunged from the sacred canon by Protestants, and are supposed to have been compiled by some Hellenistic Jew.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE POETRY OF THE HEBREWS.

I. *A large portion of the Old Testament proved to be poetical ; — Cultivation of poetry by the Hebrews. — II. Construction of Hebrew poetry. — III. Its peculiar characteristics. — IV. Different kinds of Hebrew poetry. — V. General observations for better understanding the compositions of the sacred poets.*

I. IT is obvious to the most cursory reader of the Holy Scriptures, that among the books of the Old Testament there is such an apparent diversity in style, as sufficiently discovers which of them are to be considered as poetical, and which are to be regarded as prose compositions. While the historical books and legislative writings of Moses are evidently prosaic in their composition, the book of Job, the Psalms of David, the Song of Solomon, the Lamentations of Jeremiah, a great part of the prophetic writings, and several passages occasionally scattered through the historical books, bear the most plain and distinguishing marks of poetical writing *. We can have no reason to doubt that these were originally written in verse, or in some kind of measured numbers ; though, as the antient pronunciation of the Hebrew language is now lost, we are not able, or at best very imperfectly, to ascertain the nature of the Hebrew verse. †

From the manner, however, in which Josephus, Origen, and Jerome have spoken of the Hebrew poetry, it should seem that in their time its beauty and rules were well known. Josephus repeatedly affirms ‡ that the songs composed by Moses are in heroic verse, and that David composed several sorts of verses and songs, odes and hymns, in honour of God ; some of which were in trimeters or verses of three feet, and

* In illustration of this remark, we may mention the song of Moses at the Red Sea, (Exod. xv.) ; the prophecy of Balaam, (Numb. xxiv. 15, *et seq.*) ; the song of Deborah and Barak, (Jud. v.) Nor is it improbable that the "Book of the Wars of the Lord," (Numb. xxi. 14.) and the Book of Jasher, (Josh. x. 13. 2 Sam. i. 18.) were written in poetic measures.

† Bishop Lowth, in his third lecture, has collected and delivered all that is known on the subject of Hebrew metre, to which the reader is referred, as the discussion of this very difficult question would extend this chapter to an undue length.

‡ Antiq. Jud. lib. ii. c. 16. § 4. lib. iv. c. 8. § 44. and lib. vii. c. 12. § 3.

others in pentameters or verses of five feet. Origen and Eusebius are said to have espoused the same notion; and Jerome, probably influenced by the manner in which he found the poetical parts of the Old Testament exhibited in the manuscripts of the Septuagint version, fancied that he perceived iambic, alcaic, and sapphic verses in the psalms, similar to those occurring in the works of Pindar and Horace; hexameters and pentameters in the songs of Deuteronomy and Isaiah, the book of Job, and those of Solomon; and sapphic verses in the Lamentations of Jeremiah *. Among modern writers, the nature and genius of Hebrew poetry have been warmly contested †: but the subject was so completely settled by the late eminently learned Bishop of London, Dr. Lowth, as no longer to admit of disputation. The following account of Hebrew poetry, therefore, is chiefly abridged from his much and deservedly admired lectures ‡, and from the preliminary dissertation prefixed to his version of the prophecy of Isaiah.

The peculiar excellence of the Hebrew poetry, he remarks, will appear when we consider that its origin and earliest application have been clearly traced to the service of religion. To celebrate in hymns and songs the praises of Jehovah—to decorate the worship of the Most High with all the charms and graces of harmony—to give force and energy to the de-

* Hieronymi, Præfat. in Chronic. Epist. 135. ad Paul. Urb. et Epist. ad Paulin. Comment. in Ezek. c. 30.

† Carpzov (Introd. ad Libros Canonicos Vet. Test. pars ii. pp. 28, 29) has given a list of antient and modern writers who have treated on Hebrew poetry; and in pp. 2—27 he has noticed the various discordant opinions on this topic. The hypothesis of Bishop Hare on Hebrew metre was refuted by Bishop Lowth at the end of his Lectures, and also in his "Larger Confutation," published in 1766, in 8vo, in answer to Dr. Edwards's Latin Letter in defence of Hare's system, published in the preceding year. The general opinion of the learned world has coincided with the arguments of Lowth.

‡ The first edition of these lectures appeared in 1753, in 4to, under the title of "*De Sacra Poësi Hebræorum Prælectiones Academicæ*;" a second edition was printed by Bishop Lowth in 1763, and, a few years after, a further and enlarged edition in two volumes octavo; the second volume consisting of additions made by the celebrated Professor Michaelis, who had reprinted the *Prælectiones* at Göttingen. Several subsequent editions have issued from the Clarendon press; and in 1815 Professor Rosenmüller published an edition with the notes of Michaelis, and some further annotations of his own, at Leipsic, in one volume octavo. In 1787 the late Dr. George Gregory printed his excellent English translation of Bishop Lowth's lectures, in two octavo volumes, with some very important additional notes; which was reprinted in 1816. In 1787 M. Herder published at Leipsic two octavo volumes *On the Spirit of Hebrew Poetry*; from which a selection was translated and published in 1801, under the title of *Oriental Dialogues*. Both these publications are distinguished by that bold criticism, which for the last fifty or sixty years has characterized too many of those German divines, to whose researches in other respects biblical literature is so largely indebted. Sir William Jones has a few observations on Hebrew metres in his *Poëseos Asiaticæ* Comment. cap. ii. (Works, vi. pp. 22—59).

vout affections—was the sublime employment of the sacred muses: and it is more than probable that the very early use of sacred music in the public worship of the Hebrews contributed not a little to the peculiar character of their poetry, and might impart to it that appropriate form, which, though chiefly adapted to this particular purpose, it nevertheless preserves on every other occasion. In the Old Testament we have ample evidence that music and poetry were cultivated from the earliest ages among the Hebrews. In the days of the Judges, mention is made of the schools or colleges of the prophets; in which the candidates for the prophetic office, under the direction of some superior prophet, being altogether removed from intercourse with the world, devoted themselves entirely to the exercises and study of religion: and, though the sacred history affords us but little information concerning their institutes and discipline, yet it is manifest from 1 Sam. x. 5—10, and xix. 20—24, that a principal part of their occupation consisted in celebrating the praises of Jehovah in hymns and poetry, with choral chants accompanied with various musical instruments. But it was during the reign of David that music and poetry were carried to the greatest perfection. For the service of the tabernacle he appointed four thousand Levites, divided into twenty-four courses, and marshalled under several leaders, whose sole business it was to sing hymns, and to perform the instrumental music in the public worship. Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun were the chief directors of the music, and, from the titles of some of the psalms, we may infer that they also were excellent composers of hymns or sacred poems. In the first book of Chronicles (ch. xxv.) we have an account of the institutions of David; which were more costly, splendid, and magnificent than any that ever obtained in the public service of other nations.

II. The poetry of the Hebrews is of a peculiar description, unlike every other species of verse that has been transmitted to us from antient times. That it is not composed in rhyme is very evident; and it is equally clear that it does not consist in measured lines of *equal* length, similar to our modern blank verse. There are, however, several circumstances or indications, which, if duly considered, will enable us to form a tolerably correct idea of its general construction.

I. The first and most manifest indication of verse in the Hebrew poetical books presents itself in the acrostic or alphabetical poems, of which there remain many examples, and those of various kinds. The nature or form of these poems is thus defined by Bishop Lowth:—The poem consists of twenty-two

lines, or of twenty-two systems of lines, or periods, or stanzas, according to the number of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; and every line, or every stanza, begins with each letter in its order, as it stands in the alphabet; that is, the first line, or first stanza, begins with א, (*aleph*), the second with ב, (*beth*), and so on. This was certainly intended for the assistance of the memory, and was chiefly employed in subjects of common use, as maxims of morality, and forms of devotion; which being expressed in detached sentences, or aphorisms, (the form in which the sages of the most antient times delivered their instructions), the inconvenience arising from the subject, the want of connexion in the parts, and of a regular train of thought carried through the whole, was remedied by this artificial contrivance in the form. There are still extant in the books of the Old Testament twelve * of these poems; three of them perfectly alphabetical †, in which every line is marked by its initial letter; the other nine less perfectly alphabetical, in which every stanza only is so distinguished. Of the three former it is to be remarked, that not only every single line is distinguished by its initial letter, but that the whole poem is laid out into stanzas; two ‡ of these poems each into ten stanzas, all of two lines, except the two last stanzas in each, which are of three lines; in these the sense and the construction manifestly point out the division into stanzas, and mark the limit of every stanza. The third § of these perfectly alphabetical poems consists of twenty-two stanzas of three lines: but in this the initial letter of every stanza is also the initial letter of every line of that stanza: so that both the lines and the stanzas are infallibly limited. And in all the three poems the pauses of the sentences coincide with the pauses of the lines and stanzas. It is also further to be observed of these three poems, that the lines, so determined by the initial letters in the same poem, are remarkably equal to one another in length, in the number of words nearly, and probably in the number of syllables; and that the lines of the same stanza have a remarkable congruity one with another, in the matter and the form, in the sense and the construction.

Of the other nine poems less perfectly alphabetical, in which the stanzas only are marked with initial letters, six || consist of

* Psal. xxv. xxxiv. xxxvii. cxi. cxii. cxix. cxlv. Prov. xxxi. 10—31. Lam. i. ii. iii. iv.

† Psal. cxi. cxii. Lament. iii.

‡ Psal. cxi. cxii.

§ Lament. iii.

|| Psal. xxv. xxxiv. cxix. cxlv. Prov. xxxi. Lam. iv.

stanzas of two lines, two * of stanzas of three lines, and one † of stanzas of four lines : not taking into the account at present some irregularities, which in all probability are to be imputed to the mistakes of transcribers. And these stanzas likewise naturally divide themselves into their distinct lines, the sense and the construction plainly pointing out their limits ; and the lines have the same congruity one with another in matter and form, as was above observed in regard to the poems more perfectly alphabetical.

Another thing to be observed of the three poems perfectly alphabetical is, that in two ‡ of them the lines are shorter than those of the third § by about one-third part, or almost half : and of the other nine poems, the stanzas only of which are alphabetical, that three || consist of the longer lines, and the six others of the shorter.

Now from these examples, which are not only curious, but of real use, and of great importance in the present inquiry, we may draw some conclusions, which plainly follow from the premises, and must be admitted in regard to the alphabetical poems themselves ; which also may by analogy be applied with great probability to other poems, while the lines and stanzas are not so determined by initial letters, yet which appear in other respects to be of the same kind.

In the first place, we may safely conclude, that the poems perfectly alphabetical consist of verses properly so called ; of verses regulated by some observation of harmony or cadence ; of measure, numbers, or rhythm. For it is not at all probable in the nature of the thing, or from examples of the like kind in other languages, that a portion of mere prose, in which numbers and harmony are totally disregarded, should be laid out according to a scale of division, which carries with it such evident marks of study and labour, of art in the contrivance, and exactness in the execution. And we presume it will be easily granted in regard to the other poems, which are divided into stanzas by the initial letters, which stanzas are subdivided by the pauses of the sentence into lines easily distinguished one from another, commonly the same number of lines to a stanza in the same poem ; that these are of the same kind of composition with the former, and that they equally consist of verses. And in general, with regard to the rest of the poems of the Hebrews, bearing evidently the same marks and characteristics

* Lam. i. ii.

§ Lam. iii.

† Psal. xxxvii.

|| Lam. i. ii. iv.

‡ Psal. cxi. cxii.

of composition with the alphabetical poems in other respects, and falling into regular lines, often into regular stanzas, according to the pauses of the sentences; which stanzas and lines have a certain parity or proportion to one another; that these likewise consist of verse, distinguished from prose, not only by the style, the figures, the diction; by a loftiness of thought, and richness of imagery; but by being divided into lines, and sometimes into systems of lines; which lines having an apparent equality, similitude, or proportion, one to another, were in some sort measured by the ear, and regulated according to some general laws of metre, rhythm, harmony, or cadence.

Further, we may conclude from the example of the perfectly alphabetical poems, that whatever it might be that constituted Hebrew verse, it certainly did not consist in rhyme, or similar and correspondent sounds at the ends of the verses; for as the ends of the verses in those poems are infallibly marked, and it plainly appears that the final syllables of the correspondent verses, whether in distiches or triplets, are not similar in sound to one another, it is manifest that rhymes, or similar endings, are not an essential part of Hebrew verses. The grammatical forms of the Hebrew language in the verbs, and pronouns, and the plurals of nouns, are so simple and uniform, and bear so great a share in the termination of words, that similar endings must sometimes happen, and cannot well be avoided; but, so far from constituting an essential or principal part of the art of Hebrew versification, they seem to have been no object of attention and study, nor to have been industriously sought after as a favourite accessory ornament. *

2. The Hebrew poetry has likewise another property altogether peculiar to metrical composition. It admits foreign words, and certain particles, which seldom occur in prose composition, and thus forms a distinct poetical dialect. One or two of the peculiarities of Hebrew versification it may be proper to remark, which, as they are very observable in the alphabetical poems already noticed, may be reasonably conjectured of the rest. The first of these is, that the verses are very unequal in length; the shortest consisting of six or seven syllables, the longest extending to about twice that number: the same poem is, however, continued in verses not very unequal to each other. It must also be observed, that the close of the verse generally falls where the members of the sentences

* Bishop Lowth's *Isaiah*, vol. i. pp. vi.—xi.

are divided. That the verses had something regular in their form and composition, seems probable from their apparent parity and uniformity, and the relation which they manifestly bear to the distribution of the sentence into its members. But as to the harmony and cadence, the metre or rhythm, of what kind they were, and by what laws regulated, these examples give us no light, nor afford us sufficient principles on which to build any theory, or to form any hypothesis. For harmony arises from the proportion, relation, and correspondence of different combined sounds; and verse from the arrangement of words, and the disposition of syllables, according to number, quantity, and accent; therefore the harmony and true modulation of verse depends upon a perfect pronunciation of the language, and a knowledge of the principles and rules of versification; and metre supposes an exact knowledge of the number and quantity of syllables, and, in some languages, of the accent. But the true pronunciation of Hebrew is lost—lost to a degree far beyond what can ever be the case of any European language preserved only in writing: for the Hebrew language, like most of the other Oriental languages, expressing only the consonants, and being destitute of its vowels, has lain now for two thousand years in a manner mute and incapable of utterance: the number of syllables is in a great many words uncertain; the quantity and accent wholly unknown.*

3. But, although nothing certain can be defined concerning the metre of the particular verses, there is yet another artifice of poetry to be remarked of them when in a collective state, when several of them are taken together, which constitutes a principal and distinguishing feature in the construction of Hebrew poetry. This Bishop Lowth terms a *parallelism*: it consists in dividing every period into correspondent, and for the most part equal, numbers, which answer to one another both in sense and sound. In the first sentiment or period the sentiment is expressed; and in the second member the same sentiment is amplified, or is repeated in different terms, or is sometimes contrasted with its opposite; but in such a manner, that the same structure, and nearly the same number of words, are preserved. This is the general strain of all Hebrew poetry; instances of which occur in almost every part of the Old Testament, particularly in the ninety-sixth Psalm.†

* Lowth's Lectures, No. iii. pp. 33—39, edit. 2. or vol. i. pp. 58—65 of Dr. Gregory's Translation, where examples are adduced at considerable length. See also Lowth's Isaiah, vol. i. pp. xi. xii.

† On the peculiar construction of parallelisms, see Vol. I. pp. 318—323, *supra*.

It is in a great measure owing to this form of composition that our authorized version, though executed in prose, retains so much of a poetical cast, for, that version being strictly word for word after the original, the form and order of the original sentences are preserved; which, by this artificial structure, this regular alternation and correspondence of parts, makes the ear sensible of a departure from the common style and tone of prose.*

The origin of this form of poetical composition among the Hebrews, Bishop Lowth has satisfactorily deduced from the manner in which they were accustomed to sing or chant their sacred hymns. They were accompanied with music, and were alternately sung by opposite choirs; sometimes one choir performed the hymn itself, while the other sang a particular distich, which was regularly interposed at stated intervals. In this manner we learn that Moses with the Israelites chanted the ode at the Red Sea (Exod. xv. 20, 21): and the same order is observable in some of the psalms which are composed in this form. On some occasions, however, the musical performance was differently conducted, one of the choirs singing a single verse to the other, while the other constantly added a verse in some respect correspondent. Of this the following distich is an example:—

Sing praises to Jehovah, for he is good,
Because his mercy endureth for ever. (Psal. cxxxvi. 1).

Which, Ezra informs us, (iii. 10. 11.) was sung by the priests and Levites in alternate choirs, “after the ordinance of David, king of Israel;” as indeed may be collected from the hundred and thirty-sixth psalm itself, in which the latter verse sung by the latter choir forms a perpetual epode. Of the same nature is the song of the women concerning Saul and David (2 Sam. xviii. 7): and in the very same manner does Isaiah describe the seraphin as chanting the praises of Jehovah—“they cried one to another,” that is alternately,

Holy, holy, holy, Jehovah God of hosts!
The whole earth is filled with his glory. (Isa. vi. 3).

But the fullest example perhaps of this style of composition is to be found in the twenty-fourth psalm, composed on occasion of the induction of the ark to mount Sion; the mode of performing which is particularly illustrated by Bishop

* Blair's Lectures, vol. iii. p. 169.

Lowth *, and must have had a most noble and impressive effect.

III. Independently of the peculiar mode of construction above described, the sacred poetry is eminently distinguished by its *sententious*, (that is, bold and concise) *figurative*, and *sublime* expressions.

1. The *sententious style* is the primary characteristic of Hebrew poetry, as being more conspicuous and comprehensive than any other style: for, although there are many passages in the sacred writings which are highly figurative and infinitely sublime, yet they all manifestly assume a sententious form. There are some also, and those not inelegant, which possess little more of the characteristics of poetry than the versification, and that terseness or adaptation of the sentences which constitutes so important a part of the harmony of verse. This is manifest in most of the didactic psalms †, as well as in some others in which the matter, order, diction, and thoughts are clearly historical, but the conformation of the sentences wholly poetical. The reason of this peculiarity is thus stated by Bishop Lowth:—The Hebrew poets frequently express a sentiment with the utmost brevity and simplicity, illustrated by no circumstances, adorned with no epithets, which they very seldom use. They afterwards call in the aid of ornament: they repeat, they vary, they amplify the same sentiment; and, adding one or more sentences which run parallel to each other, they express the same or a similar, and often a contrary sentiment in nearly the same form of words. Of these three modes of ornament they make the most frequent use, namely, the amplification of the same ideas, the accumulation of others, and the opposition or antithesis of such as are contrary to each other: they dispose the corresponding sentences in regular distiches adapted to each other, and of an equal length, in which, for the most part, things answer to things, and words to words. These forms again are diversified by notes of admiration, comparison, negation, and more particularly interrogation; whence a singular degree of force and elevation is frequently added to the composition.

2. A second characteristic of Hebrew poetry is, the *highly figurative style*, employed by the sacred writers. Figurative

* Lecture xxvii. Bishop Horsley, in his translation of the Book of Psalms, has divided them so as to exhibit the construction of those divine odes to the best possible advantage.

† By the epithet *didactic* Bishop Lowth means one which expresses some moral precept in elegant and pointed verses, often illustrated by a comparison either expressed or implied, similar to the *Γνωμαί* (*gnomai*) and adages of the antient sages.

language, indeed, is to be found in the poetical writings of every age and country, but especially among the Oriental poets. This, a sensible writer * has remarked, is perfectly natural and consistent: our first views of objects are generally exaggerated, and make a strong impression on the mind from their novelty; hence it is natural to speak of them in poetical language: and this language is perfectly adapted to prophecy, since it was natural that the prophets should describe in glowing language what they had seen in vision and ecstasy. As, however, the figurative language of Scripture has already been amply discussed †, together with the sources whence it was derived by the Hebrew poets, any further observations on this subject would be unnecessary. We pass therefore to,

3. The third characteristic of sacred poesy—*sublimity*. This term is to be taken in its most extensive sense—not merely as that which exhibits great objects with a magnificent display of imagery and diction, but that force of composition, whatever it be, which strikes and overpowers the mind, which excites the passions, and which expresses ideas at once with perspicuity and elevation; not solicitous whether the language be plain or ornamented, refined or familiar.

The sublime consists either in *language* or in *sentiment*.

The poetry of every language has a style and form of expression peculiar to itself, forcible, magnificent, and sonorous; the words pompous and energetic; the whole form and complexion different from what we meet with in common life. This principle, which pervades all poetry, prevails in a very high degree in the poetry of the Hebrews. Not to cite a variety of passages, let the inquisitive reader, who may be desirous of more perfect information upon this subject, take the book of Job: let him read the historical proem of that book; let him then proceed to the metrical parts, and let him diligently attend to the first speech of Job. In this passage, not only the force, the beauty, and the sublimity of the sentiments are unrivalled; but such is the character of the diction in general; so vivid is the expression; so interesting the assemblage of objects; so close and connected the sentence; and so animated and passionate the whole arrangement, that the entire compass of Hebrew literature—we might add of universal poetry—contains nothing more poetical.

Sublimity in sentiment proceeds either from a certain elevation of mind and a happy boldness of conception, or from a strong

* Williams's Translation of the "Song of Songs," p. 22.

† See Vol. I. Chap. IV. pp. 363—430, *supra*.

impulse of the soul when agitated by the more violent affections. We have some very striking and beautiful instances of it in Psal. xxxiii. 9; Job xxxviii. 4—11; Job xi. 7—9; Psal. cxxxvii. 7—10; Job xl. 10—14, and xvi. 9—14; Isa. xiii. 6—13. *

IV. The sacred writers have left us several kinds of poetical composition: they do not, however, appear to have cultivated either the *epic* or the *dramatic* species, unless we take these terms in a very wide sense, and refer to these classes those poems in which several interlocutors are introduced. Thus M. Ilgen †, and after him Mr. Good ‡, conceive the book of Job to be a regular epic poem: while Messieurs Velthusen and Ammon think that the Song of Songs exhibits traces of a dramatic or melo-dramatic structure. Bishop Lowth, however, reduces the various productions of the Hebrew poets to the following classes, viz.

1. *Prophetic poetry*.—Concerning this species of composition, see Chapter VI. Section I. *infra*.

2. *Elegiac poetry*.—Of this description are several passages in the prophetic books §, as well as in the book of Job **, and many of David's psalms that were composed on occasions of distress and mourning: the forty-second psalm in particular is in the highest degree tender and plaintive, and is one of the most beautiful specimens of the Hebrew elegy. The lamentation of David over his friend Jonathan (2 Sam. i. 17—27) is another most beautiful elegy: but the most regular and perfect elegiac composition in the Scriptures, perhaps in the whole world, is the book entitled The Lamentations of Jeremiah, of which we have given a particular analysis *infra*, Chap. VIII. Section II.

3. *Of the didactic poetry* of the Hebrews the book of Proverbs is the principal instance: to this class may also be referred the book of Ecclesiastes, and some of the psalms, particularly the hundred and nineteenth.

4. *Of lyric poetry*, or that which is intended to be accompanied with music, the Old Testament abounds with numerous examples. Besides a great number of hymns and songs, which are dispersed through the historical and prophetic books, such as the ode of Moses at the Red Sea (Exod. xv), his pro-

* Bishop Lowth, Lect. xiv—xvii.

† Jobi, antiquissimi carminis Hebraici Natura atque Virtutes, cap. 3.

‡ Introductory Dissertation to his Version of Job, p. xx.

§ See Amos v. 1, 2. 16; Jer. ix. 17—22; Ezek. xxii. xxvii. 12—19, and xxxii.

** See Job iii. vi. vii. x. xiv. xvii. xix. xxix. xxx.

phetic ode, (Deut. xxxii.) the triumphal ode of Deborah (Judg. v), the prayer of Habakkuk (iii), and many similar pieces; the entire book of Psalms is to be considered as a collection of sacred odes, possessing every variety of form, and supported with the highest spirit of lyric poetry;—sometimes sprightly, cheerful, and triumphant; sometimes solemn and magnificent; and sometimes tender, soft, and pathetic.

5. Of the *idyl*, or short pastoral poem*, the historical psalms afford abundant instances. The seventy-eighth, hundred and fifth, hundred and sixth, hundred and thirty-sixth, and the hundred and thirty-ninth psalms, may be adduced as singularly beautiful specimens of the sacred idyl: to which may be added Isa. ix. 8—x. 4.

6. Of *dramatic poetry*† Bishop Lowth adduces examples in the Song of Solomon and the book of Job, understanding the term in a more extended sense than that in which it is usually received. Bishop Horsley thinks that very many of the psalms are a kind of dramatic odes‡. Some critics, however, are of opinion that the Song of Solomon is a collection of sacred idyls; and M. Bauer is disposed to consider the former book as approximating nearest to the *Mekâma*, that is, ‘the assemblies,’ moral discourses or conversations of the celebrated Arabian poet Hariri.§

V. We have already had occasion to remark, that the poetry of the Hebrews derives its chief excellence from its being dedicated to religion. Nothing can be conceived more elevated, more beautiful, or more elegant, than the compositions of the Hebrew bards; in which the sublimity of the subject is fully equalled by the energy of the language and the dignity of the style. Compared with them, the most brilliant productions of the Greek and Roman muses, who often employed themselves on frivolous or very trifling themes, are infinitely inferior in the scale of excellence. The Hebrew poet, who worshipped Jehovah as the sovereign of his people—who believed all the laws, whether sacred or civil, which he was bound to obey, to be of divine enactment—and who was taught that man was dependent upon God for every thing—meditated upon nothing but Jehovah; to Him he devoutly referred all

* Bishop Lowth defines an idyl to be a poem of moderate length, of a uniform middle style, chiefly distinguished for elegance and sweetness; regular and clear as to the plot, conduct, and arrangement.

† Lowth, *Prelect.* xviii—xxxiv.

‡ See Bishop Horsley’s opinion at length *infra*, Chap. V. Sect. II. § ii.

§ Bauer, *Hermeneut. Sacr.* p. 386.

things, and placed his supreme delight in celebrating the divine attributes and perfections. If, however, we would enter fully into the beauties of the sacred poets, there are two general observations, which it will be necessary to keep in mind, whenever we analyze or examine the Songs of Sion.

The first is, that *we carefully investigate their nature and genius*. For, as the Hebrew poems, though various in their kinds, are each marked by a character peculiar to itself, and by which they are distinguished from each other, we shall be enabled to enter more fully into their elegance and beauty, if we have a correct view of their form and arrangement. For instance, if we wish critically to expound the Psalms, we ought to investigate the nature and properties of the Hebrew ode, as well as the form and structure of the Hebrew elegies, &c., and ascertain in what respects they differ from the odes, elegies, &c. of the Greek poets. In like manner, when studying the Proverbs of Solomon, we should recollect that the most antient kind of instruction was by means of moral sentences, in which the first principles of antient philosophy were contained; and, from a comparison of the Hebrew, Greek, and other gnomic sentences, we should investigate the principal characters of a proverb. In the book of Job are to be observed the unity of action, delineation of manners, the external form and construction of the poem, &c.

Of all modern publications extant, Bishop Lowth's Lectures and Mr. Good's Introductory Dissertation to his Version of Job, are the most useful helps for the right understanding of this most antient book.

Further, in interpreting the compositions of the Hebrew bards, it ought not to be forgotten, that *the objects of our attention are the productions of poets, and of oriental poets in particular*. It is therefore necessary that we should be acquainted with the country in which the poet lived, its situation and peculiarities, and also with the manners of the inhabitants, and the idiom of the language. Oriental poetry abounds with strong expressions, bold metaphors, glowing sentiments, and animated descriptions, portrayed in the most lively colours. Hence the words of the Hebrew poets are neither to be understood in too lax a sense, nor to be interpreted too literally. In the comparisons introduced by them, the point of resemblance between the object of comparison, and the thing with which it is compared, should be examined, but not strained too far; and the force of the personifications, allegories, or other figures that may be introduced, should be fully considered. Above all, it

should be recollected, that as the sacred poets lived in the East, their ideas and manners were totally different from ours, and consequently are not to be considered according to *our* modes of thinking. It is from inattention to this circumstance that the Hebrew poems have neither been correctly understood, nor their beauties duly felt and appreciated.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE POETICAL BOOKS.

THOUGH some of the sacred writings, which present themselves to our notice in the present chapter, are anterior in point of date to the Historical Books, yet they are usually classed by themselves under the title of the *Poetical Books*; because they are almost wholly composed in Hebrew verse. This appellation is of considerable antiquity. Gregory Nazianzen calls them the *Five Metrical Books*; Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, in his iambic poem addressed to Seleucus, enumerates them, and gives them a similar denomination; as also do Epiphanius and Cyril of Jerusalem*. The Poetical Books are five in number, viz. Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Canticles or Song of Solomon: in the Jewish canon of Scripture they are classed among the Hagio-grapha, or Holy Writings; and in our Bibles they are placed between the Historical and Prophetical Books.

* Greg. Naz. Carm. 33, v. 16. op. tom. ii. p. 98. Paris, 1511. Epiphanius de Pond. et Mens. p. 533. Suicer's Thesaurus, tom. ii. voce *σχημα*.

SECTION I.

ON THE BOOK OF JOB.

- I. *Title of the book*; — II. *Reality of Job's person*; — III. *Age in which he lived*; — IV. *Scene of the poem of Job*; — V. *Author and canonical authority*; — VI. *Structure of the poem*; — VII. *Argument and scope*; — VIII. *Rules for studying this book to advantage*; IX. *Synopsis*; — X. *Idea of the patriarchal theology, as contained in the book of Job*.

I. THIS book has derived its title from the venerable patriarch Job, whose prosperity, afflictions, and restoration from the deepest adversity, are here recorded, together with his exemplary and unequalled patience under all his calamities. No book perhaps has more exercised the ingenuity of critics and commentators than this of Job; and though the limits necessarily assigned to this article prevent us from detailing all the various and discordant hypotheses which have been offered con-

cerning it, yet a brief retrospect of the principal opinions that have been entertained respecting this portion of Scripture can at no time be either uninteresting or unimportant.

II. Although this book professes to treat of a real person, yet the actual existence of the patriarch has been questioned by many eminent critics, who have endeavoured to prove that the whole poem is a mere fictitious narration, intended to instruct through the medium of parable. This opinion was first announced by the celebrated Jewish Rabbi Maimonides*, and has since been adopted by Leclerc, Michaelis, Semler, Bishop Stock, and others. The reality of Job's existence, on the contrary, (independently of its being the uniform belief of the Jewish and Christian church), has been maintained with equal ability by Leusden, Calmet, Heidegger, Carpzov, Van Til, Spanheim, Moldenhawer, Schultens, Ilgen, Bishops Patrick, Sherlock, Lowth, and Tomline, Drs. Kennicott, Hales, Gray, and Magee, Messieurs Peters and Good, Drs. Taylor and Priestley, and, in short, by almost every other modern commentator and critic.

The principal arguments commonly urged against the reality of Job's existence are derived from the nature of the exordium in which Satan appears as the accuser of Job; from the temptations and sufferings permitted by the Almighty Governor of the world to befall an upright character; from the artificial regularity of the numbers by which the patriarch's possessions are described, as seven thousand, three thousand, one thousand, five hundred, &c.

With regard to the first argument, the incredibility of the conversation which is related to have taken place between the Almighty and Satan, "who is supposed to return with *news* from the terrestrial regions"—an able commentator has remarked, why should such a conversation be supposed incredible? The attempt at wit, in the word *news*, is somewhat out of place; for the interrogation of the Almighty, "Hast thou fixed thy view upon my servant Job, a perfect and upright MAN?" instead of aiming at the acquisition of news, is intended as a severe and most appropriate sarcasm upon the fallen spirit. "Hast THOU—who, with superior faculties and a more comprehensive knowledge of my will, hast not continued perfect and upright—fixed thy view upon a subordinate being, far weaker and less informed than thyself, who has continued so?" "The attendance of the apostate at the tribunal of the Almighty is

* Moreh Nevochim, part ii. sect. 22.

plainly designed to show us that good and evil angels are equally amenable to him, and equally subject to his authority;—a doctrine common to every part of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, and, except in the mythology of the Parsees, recognized by perhaps every antient system of religion whatever. The part assigned to Satan in the present work is that expressly assigned to him in the case of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, and of our Saviour in the wilderness; and which is assigned to him generally, in regard to mankind at large, by all the evangelists and apostles whose writings have reached us, both in their strictest historical narratives, and closest argumentative inductions. And hence the argument which should induce us to regard the present passage as fabulous, should induce us to regard all the rest in the same light which are imbued with the same doctrine;—a view of the subject which would sweep into nothingness a much larger portion of the Bible than we are confident M. Michselis would choose to part with.

The other arguments are comparatively of small moment. We want not fable to tell us that good and upright men may occasionally become the victims of accumulated calamities; for it is a living fact, which, in the mystery of Providence, is perpetually occurring in every country: while as to the roundness of the numbers by which the patriarch's possessions are described, nothing could have been more ungraceful or superfluous than for the poet to have descended to units, had even the literal numeration demanded it. And, although he is stated to have lived a hundred and forty years after his restoration to prosperity, and in an æra in which the duration of man did not perhaps much exceed that of the present day, it should be recollected, that in his person as well as in his property he was specially gifted by the Almighty: that, from various passages, he seems to have been younger than all the interlocutors, except Elihu, and much younger than one or two of them: that his longevity is particularly remarked, as though of more than usual extent; and that, even in the present age of the world, we have well-authenticated instances of persons having lived, in different parts of the globe, to the age of a hundred and fifty, a hundred and sixty, and even a hundred and seventy years. *

It is not necessary for the historical truth of the book of Job, that its language should be a direct transcript of that

* See *Pantologia*, art. *Life*; and *Encyclopædia Britannica*, art. *Longevity*.

actually employed by the different characters introduced into it; for in such case we should scarcely have a single book of real history in the world. The Iliad, the Shah Nameh, and the Lusiad, must at once drop all pretensions to such a description; and even the pages of Sallust and Cæsar, of Rollin and Hume, must stand upon very questionable authority. It is enough that the real sentiment be given, and the general style copied: and this, in truth, is all that is aimed at, not only in our best reports of parliamentary speeches, but, in many instances (which is indeed much more to the purpose) by the writers of the New Testament, in their quotations from the Old." *

Independently of these considerations, which we think sufficiently refute the objections adduced against the reality of Job's existence, we may observe, that there is every possible evidence that the book, which bears his name, contains a *literal history* of the temptations and sufferings of a real character.

In the first place, that Job was a real, and not a fictitious character, may be inferred from the manner in which he is mentioned in the Scriptures. Thus, the prophet Ezekiel speaks of him:—"Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God," (Ezek. xiv. 14). In this passage the prophet ranks Noah, Daniel, and Job together, as powerful intercessors with God; the first for his family; the second for the wise men of Babylon; and the third for his friends: now, since Noah and Daniel were unquestionably real characters, we must conclude the same of Job. "Behold," says the apostle James, "we count them happy which endure: ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy," (James v. 11.) It is scarcely to be believed that a divinely inspired apostle would refer to an imaginary character as an example of patience, or in proof of the mercy of God †. But, besides the authority of the inspired writers, we have the strongest internal evidence, from the book itself, that Job was a real person: for it expressly specifies the names of persons, places, facts, and other circumstances usually related in true histories. Thus we have the name, country, piety, wealth, &c. of Job described, (ch. i.); the names, number, and acts of his

* Mr. Good's Introductory Dissertation to his Version of Job, pp. xv—xvii. See also Dr. Magee's Discourses and Dissertations on the Atonement, vol. ii. pp. 49—53. Dr. Gregory's Translation of Bishop Lowth's Lectures, vol. ii. pp. 358—370. in notes.

† Elements of Christian Theology, vol. i. p. 94.

children are mentioned; the conduct of his wife is recorded as a fact, (ii.); his friends, their names, countries, and discourses with him in his afflictions, are minutely delineated, (ii. 11, &c). And can we rationally imagine that these were not realities?

Further, no reasonable doubt can be entertained respecting the real existence of Job, when we consider that it is proved by the concurrent testimony of all Eastern tradition: he is mentioned by the author of the book of Tobit, who lived during the Assyrian captivity*; he is also repeatedly mentioned by Mohammed† as a real character. The whole of his history, with many fabulous additions, was known among the Syrians and Chaldeans; many of the noblest families among the Arabians are distinguished by his name‡, and boast of being descended from him. So late even as the end of the fourth century, we are told, that there were many persons who went into Arabia to see Job's dunghill§, which, in the nature of things, could not have subsisted through so many ages; but the fact of superstitious persons making pilgrimages to it sufficiently attests the reality of his existence, as also do the traditionary accounts concerning the place of Job's abode. ||

III. Since, then, the book of Job contains the history of a real character, the next point to be considered is the age in which he lived—a question concerning which there is as great a diversity of opinion, as upon any other subject connected with this venerable monument of sacred antiquity. Thus, some think that he lived in the days of Moses, from a supposed resemblance between the style of Moses and that of Job; others, in the time of the Judges, from an expression in Job xxvii. 12. because at that time all was *vanity*, and every man did that which was good in his own eyes. Others, again, refer him to the time of Ahasuerus or Artaxerxes Longimanus, on account of the search then made for beautiful women from whom the monarch might select a consort, (Esth. ii. 2, &c.) and because Job's daughters are mentioned (Job xlii. 15.) as being the fairest in the whole land. Some make him to have been contemporary with Solomon and the queen of Sheba, because the

* Tobit ii. 12, in the Vulgate version, which is supposed to have been executed from a more extended history of Tobit than the original of the Greek version.

† Sale's Koran, pp. 271. 375, 4to edit. See also D'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque Orientale*, voce *Aiúb*, tom. i. p. 145, 4to edit.

‡ As the father of the celebrated Sultan Saladin, (Elmacin, *Hist. Saracen.* p. 3); and also Saladin himself, whose dynasty is known in the East by the name of Aiubiah or Jobites. D'Herbelot, tom. i. pp. 146, 147.

§ Chrysostom. ad pop. Antioch. Rom. 5. Op. tom. ii. p. 59 A.

|| Thevenot's *Voyage*, p. 447. La Roque, *Voyages de Syrie*, tom. i. p. 239.

Sabeans are noticed in Job i. 15, &c.; and others, with Nebuchadnezzar, because the Chaldeans are introduced in Job i. 17. Lastly, some state him to have lived in the time of Jacob, whose daughter Dinah they suppose him to have married: and this conjecture they ground upon the resemblance between the expression in Job ii. 10. (*thou speakest like a foolish woman*), and that in Gen. xxxiv. 7. (———*hath wrought folly in Israel*). * The puerility of these conjectures sufficiently indicates their weakness: one thing, however, is generally admitted with respect to the age of the book of Job, viz. its remote antiquity. Even those who contend for the late production of the book of Job are compelled to acquiesce in this particular. Grotius thinks the events of the history are such, as cannot be placed later than the sojourning of the Israelites in the wilderness. Bishop Warburton, in like manner, admits them to bear the marks of high antiquity; and Michaelis confesses the manners to be perfectly Abrahamic, that is, such as were common to all the seed of Abraham, Israelites, Ishmaelites, and Idumeans. † The following are the principal circumstances from which the age of Job may be collected and ascertained. ‡

1. The Usserian, or Bible chronology, dates the trial of Job about the year 1520 before the Christian æra, twenty-nine years before the departure of the Israelites from Egypt; and that the book was composed before that event, is evident from its total silence respecting the miracles which accompanied the exode; such as the passage of the Red Sea, the destruction of the Egyptians, the manna in the desert, &c.; all of which happened in the vicinity of Job's country, and were so apposite in the debate concerning the ways of Providence, that some notice could not but have been taken of them, if they had been coeval with the poem of Job.

2. That it was composed before Abraham's migration to Canaan may also be inferred, from its silence respecting the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other cities of

* Mercerus, Præf. ad Job. The Bishop of Killala (Dr. Stock), after Bishop Warburton, refers the time of Job to that of Ezra, whom he supposes to be its author. (Preface to his Translation of Job, pp. v. vi). His arguments are very largely examined and refuted by Dr. Magee, Discourses, vol. ii. pp. 87—154. See also British Critic, vol. xxix. (O. S.) pp. 369—372.

† Grotius, Præf. ad Job. Warburton's Divine Legation, book vi. sect. 2. Michaelis, Notæ et Epimetra in Lowthii Prælectiones, p. 181. Magee, vol. ii. p. 57.

‡ These observations are digested from the united remarks of Dr. Hales, in his Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book i. pp. 55—59, and of Dr. Magee, in his Discourses, vol. ii. pp. 58—63.

the plain, which were still nearer to Idumea, where the scene is laid.

3. The length of Job's life places him in the patriarchal times. He survived his trial one hundred and forty years (xlii. 16), and was probably not less at that time: for we read that his seven sons were all grown up, and had been settled in their own houses for a considerable time (i. 4, 5.) He speaks of the "sins of his youth" (xiii. 26), and of the prosperity of "his youth;" and yet Eliphaz addresses him as a novice:—"With *us* are both the *very aged*, much elder than *thy father*" (xv. 10.)

4. That he did not live at an earlier period may be collected from an incidental observation of Bildad, who refers Job to their forefathers for instruction in wisdom:

Inquire, I pray thee, of the *former age*,
And prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

Assigning as a reason the comparative shortness of life, and consequent ignorance of the present generation:

(For we are but of *yesterday*, and know nothing;
Because *our days upon earth are a shadow*). viii. 8, 9.

But the "fathers of the former age," or grandfathers of the present, were the contemporaries of Peleg and Joktan, in the fifth generation after the deluge: and they might easily have learned wisdom from the fountain head by conversing with Shem, or perhaps with Noah himself; whereas, in the seventh generation, the standard of human life was reduced to about two hundred years, which was a shadow compared with the longevity of Noah and his sons.

5. The general air of antiquity which pervades the manners recorded in the poem, is a further evidence of its remote date. The manners and customs, indeed, critically correspond with that early period. Thus, Job speaks of the most antient kind of writing, by *sculpture* (xix. 24): his riches also are reckoned by his cattle (xlii. 12). * Further, Job acted as high priest in his family according to the patriarchal usage, (Gen. viii. 20): for the institution of an established priesthood does not appear to have taken place anywhere until the time of Abraham. Melchizedec king of Salem was a priest of the primitive order (Gen. xiv. 18); such also was Jethro, the father-in-law of

* The word *keschitah*, which is translated *a piece of money* (xlii. 11) there is good reason to understand as signifying a lamb. See Dr. Magee's critical note, Discourses, vol. ii. pp. 59—61.

Moses. in the vicinity of Idumea, (Exod. xviii. 12). The first regular priesthood was probably instituted in Egypt, where Joseph was married to the daughter of the priest of On (Gen. xli. 45).

6. The slavish homage of prostration to princes and great men, which prevailed in Egypt, Persia, and the East in general, and which still subsists there, was unknown in Arabia at that time. Though Job was one of "the greatest men of all the East," we do not find any such adoration paid to him by his contemporaries, in the zenith of his prosperity, among the marks of respect so minutely described in the twenty-ninth chapter. "When the *young men* saw him, they *hid themselves*, (rather, *shrunk back*), through respect or rustic bashfulness; *the aged arose and stood up* in his presence, (more correctly, *ranged themselves about him*), *the princes refrained from talking*, and *laid their hand upon their mouth*; *the nobles held their peace*, and were all attention while he spoke. All this was highly respectful indeed, but still it was manly, and showed no cringing or servile adulation. With this description correspond the manners and conduct of the genuine Arabs of the present day—a majestic race, who were never conquered, and who have retained their primitive customs, features, and character, with scarcely any alteration. *

7. The allusion made by Job to that species of idolatry alone, which by general consent is admitted to have been the most antient, namely Zabianism, or the worship of the sun and moon, and also to the exertion of the judicial authority against it (xxxi. 26—28), is an additional and most complete proof of the high antiquity of the poem, as well as a decisive mark of the patriarchal age. †

* They are thus described by Sir William Jones;—"Their eyes are full of vivacity; their speech, voluble and articulate; their deportment, manly and dignified: their apprehension quick; their minds always present and attentive; with a spirit of independence appearing in the countenance of the lowest among them. Men will always differ in their ideas of civilization, each measuring it by the habits and prejudices of their own country: but, if courtesy and urbanity, a love of poetry and eloquence, and the practice of exalted virtues, be a juster proof of civilized society, we have certain proof that the people of Arabia, both on plains and in cities, in republican and monarchical states, were eminently civilized for many ages before their conquest of Persia." Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 3, or Works, vol. iii. p. 50. 8vo edit.

† Bishop Lowth's Lectures, vol. ii. p. 355, note. Although Sir William Jones could obtain but little accurate information concerning the Zabian faith, yet, he remarks, "This at least is certain, that the people of Yemen (Arabia) very soon fell into the common but fatal error of adoring the sun and the firmament: for even the third in descent from Yoktan, who was consequently as old as Nahor, took the surname of *Abdu-Shams*, or *servant of the sun*: and his family, we are assured, paid particular honour to that luminary. Other tribes worshipped the planets and fixed stars." Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 8, or Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. iii. p. 57.

8. A further evidence of the remote antiquity of this book is the language of Job and his friends; who, being all Idumeans, or at least Arabians of the adjacent country, yet conversed in Hebrew. This carries us up to an age so early as that in which all the posterity of Abraham, Israelites, Idumeans, and Arabians, yet continued to speak one common language, and had not branched into different dialects. *

9. Lastly, Dr. Hales has adduced a *new and more particular proof, drawn from astronomy*, which FIXES the time of the patriarch's trial to 184 years before the birth of Abraham: for, by a retrograde calculation, the principal stars referred to in Job †, by the names of *Chimah* and *Chesil*, or *Taurus* and *Scorpio*, are found to have been the cardinal constellations of spring and autumn in the time of Job, of which the chief stars are *Aldebaran*, the bull's eye, and *Antares*, the scorpion's heart. Knowing, therefore, the longitudes of these stars at present, the interval of time from thence to the assumed date of Job's trial will give the difference of their longitudes and ascertain their positions then, with respect to the vernal and autumnal points of intersection of the equinoctial and ecliptic; which difference is one degree in $71\frac{1}{2}$ years, according to the usual rate of the *precession of the equinoxes*. ‡

“In A. D. 1808, Aldebarna was in 2 signs 7 deg. east longitude. But since the date of Job's trial, B. C. 2338, added to 1800, makes 4138 years, the precession of the equinoxes amounted to 1 sign 27 deg. 53 min. which, being subtracted from the former quantity, left Aldebaran in only 9 deg. 7 min. longitude, or distance from the vernal intersection, which, falling within the constellation Taurus, consequently rendered it the cardinal constellation of spring, as Pisces is at present.

“In A. D. 1800 Antares was in 8 signs 6 deg. 58 min. east longitude, or 2 signs 6 deg. 58 min. east of the *autumnal* intersection: from which subtracting, as before, the amount of the precession, *Antares* was left only 9 deg. 5 min. east. Since, then, the autumnal equinox was found within *Scorpio*, this was then the cardinal constellation of *Autumn*, as *Virgo* is at present.

* Bishop Lowth, lect. xxxii. vol. ii. pp. 350, 351.

† ix. 9. xxxviii. 31, 32.

‡ For an explanation of this astronomical phenomenon, and its application to chronology, see Dr. Hales's Analysis, vol. i. pp. 185—187. For the calculations given in the text, he makes acknowledgments to Dr. Brinkley, Andrews professor of astronomy in the university of Dublin: subsequently to the making of this calculation, Dr. H. discovered that it had been anticipated and published at Paris by M. Ducontant in 1765.

“ Since, then, these calculations critically correspond with the positions of the equinoxes at the assumed date of Job’s trial ; but disagree with the lower dates of the age of Moses, and still more of Ezra, furnishing different cardinal constellations, we may rest in the assumed date of the trial as correct.

“ Such a combination and coincidence of various rays of evidence, derived from widely different sources, *history*, sacred and profane, *chronology*, and *astronomy*, and all converging to the same common focus, tend strongly to establish the time of Job’s trial as rightly assigned in the year B. c. 2337, (2130 of the common computation), or 818 years after the deluge ; 184 years before the birth of Abraham ; 474 years before the settlement of Jacob’s family in Egypt ; and 689 years before their *exode* or departure from thence.”

IV. The country, in which the scene of this poem is laid, is stated (Job. i. 1.) to be the land of Uz, which by some geographers has been placed in Sandy, and by others in Stony Arabia. Bochart strenuously advocated the former opinion, in which he has been powerfully supported by Spanheim, Calmet, Carpzov, Heidegger, and some later writers ; Michaelis and Ilgen place the scene in the valley of Damascus ; but Bishop Lowth, Dr. Magee, Dr. Hales, Mr. Good, and some later critics and philologers, have shown that the scene is laid in Idumea.

That the land of Uz or *Gnutz* (Job. i. 1.) is evidently Idumea, appears from Lam. iv. 21. Uz was the grandson of Seir the Horite. (Gen. xxxvi. 20, 21. 28. 1 Chron. i. 38. 42). Seir inhabited that mountainous tract which was called by his name antecedent to the time of Abraham, but his posterity being expelled, it was occupied by the Idumeans (Gen. xix. 6 ; Deut. ii. 12). Two other men are mentioned of the name of Uz ; one the grandson of Shem, the other the son of Nachor, the brother of Abraham ; but whether any district was called after their name is not clear. Idumea is a part of Arabia Petræa, situate on the southern extremity of the tribe of Judah, (Numb. xxxiv. 3 ; Josh. xv. 1. 21) ; the land of Uz therefore appears to have been between Egypt and Philistia. Jer. xxv. 20, where the order of the places seems to have been accurately observed in reviewing the different nations from Egypt to Babylon ; and the same people seem again to be described in exactly the same situations (Jer. xlvi—l). Nor does the statement of the inspired writer, that Job “ was the greatest of all the men of the East” (Job i. 3), militate against the situation of the land of Uz.

The expression, *men of the East, children of the East, or*

Eastern people, seems to have been the general appellation for that mingled race of people (as they are called, Jer. xxv. 20), who inhabited the country between Egypt and the Euphrates, bordering upon Judea from the South to the East; the Idumæans, the Amalekites, the Midianites the Moabites, the Ammonites, (see Judg. vi. 3. and Isa. xi. 14); of these the Idumeans and Amalekites certainly possessed the southern parts, (see Numb. xxxiv. 3. xiii. 29; 1 Sam. xxvii. 8. 10). This appears to be the true state of the case: the whole region between Egypt and Euphrates was called the East, at first in respect to Egypt (where the learned Joseph Mede thinks the Israelites acquired this mode of speaking) *, and afterwards absolutely and without any relation to situation or circumstances. Abraham is said to have sent the sons of his concubines, Hagar and Keturah, “Eastward, to the country which is commonly called the East” (Gen. xxv. 6), where the name of the region seems to have been derived from the same situation). Solomon is reported “to have excelled in wisdom all the Eastern people, and all Egypt” (1 Kings iv. 30): that is, all the neighbouring people in that quarter: for there were people beyond the boundaries of Egypt, and bordering on the south of Judea, who were famous for wisdom, namely, the Idumeans (see Jer. xlix. 7; Ob. 8), to whom we may well believe this passage might have some relation. Thus JEHOVAH addresses the Babylonians: “Arise, ascend unto Kedar, and lay waste the children of the East” (Jer. xlix. 28), notwithstanding these were really situated to the west of Babylon. Although Job, therefore, be accounted one of the Orientals, it by no means follows, that his residence must be in Arabia Deserta.

In effect, nothing is clearer than that the history of an inhabitant of Idumea is the subject of the poem which bears the name of Job, and that all the persons introduced into it were Idumeans, dwelling in Idumea, in other words Edomite Arabs. These characters are, Job himself, of the land of Uz; Eliphaz of Teman, a district of as much repute as Uz, and which, it appears from the joint testimony of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, and Obadiah †, formed a principal part of Idumea; Bildad of Shuah, who is always mentioned in conjunction with Sheba and Dedan, the first of whom was probably named after one of the brothers of Joktan or Kahtan, and the two last from two of his sons, all of them being uniformly placed in the vicinity of Idumea (Gen. xxv. 2, 3; Jer. xlix. 8); Zophar, of Naama, a city

* Mede's Works, p. 580.

† Jer. xlix. 7. 20; Ezek. xxv. 13; Amos i. 11, 12; Obad. 8, 9.

importing pleasantness, which is also stated by Joshua (xv. 21. 41) to have been situate in Idumea, and to have lain in a southern direction towards its coast, on the shores of the Red Sea; and Elihu of Baz, which, as the name of a place, occurs only once in sacred writ (Jer. xxv. 23), but is there mentioned in conjunction with Teman and Dedan; and hence necessarily, like them, a border city upon Uz or Idumea. Allowing this chorography to be correct, (and such, upon a fair review of facts, we may conclude it to be), there is no difficulty in conceiving that hordes of nomadic Chaldeans as well as Sabeans—a people addicted to rapine, and roving about at immense distances for the sake of plunder—should have occasionally infested the defenceless country of Idumea, and roved from the Euphrates even to Egypt. *

V. The different parts of the book of Job are so closely connected together, that they cannot be detached from each other. The exordium prepares the reader for what follows, supplies us with the necessary notices concerning Job and his friends, unfolds the scope, and places the calamities full in our view as an object of attention. The epilogue or conclusion, again, has reference to the exordium, and relates the happy termination of Job's trials; the dialogues which intervene, flow in regular order. Now if any one of these parts were to be taken away, the poem would be extremely defective. Without the prologue the reader would be utterly ignorant who Job was, who were his friends, and the cause of his being so grievously afflicted. Without the discourse of Elihu, (xxxii—xxxvii.) there would be a sudden and abrupt transition from the last words of Job to the address of God, for which Elihu's discourse prepares the reader. And without the epilogue or conclusion, we should remain in ignorance of the subsequent condition of Job.

Hence it is evident that the poem is the composition of a single author, but who that was, is a question concerning which the learned are very much divided in their sentiments. Elihu, Job, Moses, Solomon, Isaiah, an anonymous writer in the reign of Manasseh, Ezekiel, and Ezra, have all been contended for. The arguments already adduced respecting the age of Job †, prove that it could not be either of the latter persons. Dr. Lightfoot, from an erroneous version of xxxii. 16, 17, has conjectured that it is the production of Elihu: but the correct

* Bishop Lowth's Lectures, vol. ii. pp. 347—351. Good's Introd. Diss. to Job, pp. ii—xi.

† See § iii. pp. 119—124. of this chapter.

rendering of that passage * refutes this notion. Ilgen ascribes it probably to a descendant of Elihu. Another and more generally received opinion attributes this book to Moses: this conjecture is founded on some apparent striking coincidences of sentiment †, as well as from some marks of later date which are supposed to be discoverable in it. But, independently of the characters of antiquity already referred to, and which place the book of Job very many centuries before the time of Moses, the total absence of every the slightest allusion to the manners, customs, ceremonies, or history of the Israelites, is a direct evidence that the great legislator of the Hebrews was not, and could not, have been the author. To which may be added, that the style of Job (as Bishop Lowth has remarked) is materially different from the poetical style of Moses: for it is much more compact, concise or condensed, more accurate in the poetical conformation of the sentences: as may be observed also in the prophecies of Balaam the Mesopotamian, a foreigner indeed with respect to the Israelites, but not unacquainted either with their language, or with the worship of the true God.

Upon the whole, then, we have sufficient ground to conclude that this book was not the production of Moses, but of some earlier age. Bishop Lowth favours the opinion of Schultens, Peters, and others, (which is also adopted by Bishop Tomline and Dr. Hales), who suppose Job himself, or some contemporary, to have been the author of this poem: and there seems to be no good reason for supposing that it was not written by Job himself. It appears indeed highly probable that Job was the writer of his own story, of whose inspiration we have the clearest evidence in the forty-second chapter of this book, in which he thus addresses the Almighty: — “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee” (xlii. 5). It is plain that in this passage some privilege is in-

* See Good's Translation of Job, *in loc.* pp. 380, 381. Bishop Lowth, taking the passage in question as it stands in our English Bibles, observes that this conjecture of Lightfoot's seems at first sight rather countenanced by the exordium of the first speech of Elihu (xxxv. 15, 16), in which he seems to assume the character of the author, by continuing the narrative in his own person. But that passage which appears to interrupt the speech of Elihu, and to be a part of the narrative, the Bishop conceives to be nothing more than an apostrophe to Job, or possibly to himself; for it manifestly consists of two distiches; while, on the contrary, it is well known that all the narrative parts—all in which the author himself appears—are certainly written in prose. Lecture xxxii. vol. ii. p. 352.

† Mr. Good, who adopts this hypothesis, has collected these seeming coincidences, *Introd. Diss.* pp. lvi—lxii. Dr. Magee has examined and refuted at considerable length the arguments of Huet, Dr. Kennicott, Heath, Bishop Warburton, and others who have advocated the same notion. *Discourses on the Atonement*, vol. ii. pp. 63—80.

tended which he never had enjoyed before, and which he calls the sight of God.

He had heard of him by the “hearing of the ear,” or the tradition delivered down to him from his forefathers: but he now had a clear and sensible perception of his being and divine perfections—some light thrown in upon his mind, which carried its own evidence, and of which perhaps we can form no notion because we have never felt it, but which to him had all the certainty and clearness even of sight itself—some manifestations of the Deity made to him in vision, such as the prophets had, and from which they derived their very name of *seers*. If we allow Job himself to have been the writer of the book, two important advantages will be evidently obtained:—*First*, all objections to historical truth will vanish at once: no one could tell us his own story as well as Job; nor have we any reason to question its veracity. The dialogue too will then appear to have been the substance of a real conversation, for no dialogue was ever more natural. If the story be told us in verse, or in the prophetic style and language, as the first of these was a practice of the highest antiquity, the other adds the most sacred and unquestionable authority to it: so that neither truth nor ornament is here wanting, any more than dignity of subject, to render this a book of inestimable value. The *second* advantage alluded to is this—that if Job himself were the writer of the book, then every point of history and every doctrine of religion here treated of, which coincide with those delivered in the books of Moses, are an additional proof and confirmation of the latter, as being evidently derived from some other source, not borrowed from the Pentateuch. *

“But whether we suppose Job the author of the book, or not; its great antiquity, and even its priority to the age of Moses, seems to stand on strong grounds. And upon the whole, perhaps we may not unreasonably conjecture the history of the book to be this.—The poem, being originally written either by Job, or some contemporary of his, and existing in the time of Moses, might fall into his hands, whilst residing in the land of Midian, or afterwards when in the neighbourhood of Idumea; and might naturally be made use of by him, to represent to the Hebrews, either whilst repining under their Egyptian bondage, or murmuring at their long wanderings in the wilderness, the great duty of *submission to the will of God*. The encouragement which this book holds

* Peters' Critical Dissertation on Job, p. 123, *et seq.*

out, that every good man suffering patiently will finally be rewarded, rendered it a work peculiarly calculated to minister mingled comfort and rebuke to the distressed and discontented Israelites, and might therefore well have been employed by Moses for this purpose. We may also suppose, that Moses, in transcribing, might have made some small and unimportant alterations, which will sufficiently account for *occasional* and *partial* resemblances of expression between it and the Pentateuch, if any such there be.

This hypothesis both furnishes a reasonable compromise between the opinions of the great critics, who are divided upon the point of Moses being the author; and supplies an answer to a question of no small difficulty, which hangs upon almost every other solution: namely, when, and wherefore, a book treating manifestly of the concerns of a stranger, and in no way connected with their affairs, was received by the Jews into their sacred canon? For Moses having thus applied the book to their use, and sanctioned it by his authority, it would naturally have been enrolled among their sacred writings: and from the antiquity of that enrolment, no record would consequently appear of its introduction." *

The poem of Job being thus early introduced into the sacred volume, we have abundant evidence of its subsequent recognition as a canonical and inspired book, in the circumstance of its being occasionally quoted or copied by almost every Hebrew writer who had an opportunity of referring to it, from the age of Moses to that of Malachi; especially by the Psalmist, by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, (not to mention several of the apocryphal writers) †. The reality of Job's person, we have already remarked ‡, was particularly recognized by the prophet Ezekiel § (xiv. 14. 18. 20), and consequently the reality

* Magee's Discourses, vol. ii. p. 82. This notion, Dr. Magee remarks, is not without support from many respectable authorities. The antient commentator on Job, under the title of Origen, has handed down a piece of traditional history, which perfectly accords with it. See *Patrick's Preface to Job*. Many of the most respectable early writers seem to have adopted the same idea, as may be seen in Huet (*Dem. Evang.* p. 326), and, with some slight variation, it has been followed by that learned author. Patrick also and Peters speak of it as a reasonable hypothesis. (*Crit. Diss.* pref. pp. xxxiv. xxxv). And certainly it possesses this decided advantage, that it *solves all the phenomena*. *Ibid.*, pp. 83, 84.

† Huet, *Demonstr. Evang.* tom. i. pp. 324, 325, and Mr. Good in the notes to his *Version of Job*, have pointed out numerous instances of passages thus directly copied or referred to.

‡ See p. 118, *supra*, of this volume.

§ As Job lived so many ages before the time of the prophet Ezekiel, mere oral tradition of such a person could not have subsisted through so long a period of time, without appearing at last as uncertain or fabulous. There must therefore have been some

and canonical authority of his book: a similar admission of it was made by the apostle James (v. 11); and it is expressly cited by Saint Paul (compare 1 Cor. iii. 19. and Job. v. 13), who prefaces his quotation from it by the words, "*It is written,*" agreeably to the common form of quoting from other parts of Scripture. All these testimonies, direct and collateral, when taken together, afford such a body of convincing evidence as fully justifies the primitive fathers and early councils in their reception of it as an inspired book: and — independently of its completing the Jewish and Christian canons of Scripture, by uniting as full an account as is necessary of the patriarchal dispensation, with the two other dispensations by which it was progressively succeeded — the enrolment of the history of Job in the sacred volume may perhaps have been designed as an intimation of the future admission of the Gentiles into the church of Christ. †

VI. All commentators and critics are unanimously agreed that the poem of Job is the most antient book extant: but concerning its species and structure there is a considerable diversity of opinion, some contending that it is an epic poem, while others maintain it to be a drama.

M. Ilgen on the continent, and Mr. Good in our own country, are the only two commentators that have come to the writer's knowledge, who advocate the hypothesis that Job is a regular epic. The former critic contends that it is a regular epic, the subject of which is tried and victorious innocence; and that it possesses unity of action, delineation of character, plot, and catastrophe — not exactly, indeed, in the Grecian, but in the Oriental style ‡. Mr. Good § observes, that were it necessary to enter minutely into the question, this poem might easily be proved to possess all the more prominent features of an epic, as laid down by Aristotle himself; such as unity, completion, and grandeur in its action; loftiness in its sentiments and language; multitude and variety in the passions which it developes. Even the characters, though not numerous, are

history of Job in Ezekiel's time; no other history but that which we now have, and which has always had a place in the Hebrew code, was ever heard of or pretended. Therefore this must have been the history of Job in Ezekiel's time, and must have been generally known and read as true and authentic, and consequently must have been written near to (rather in) the age when the fact was transacted, and not in after times, when its credibility would have been greatly diminished. Dr. Taylor's Scheme of Scripture Divinity, ch. 22. *in fine*, (in Bishop Watson's Collection of Tracts, vol. i. p. 93).

† Gregorii Præfat. in Jobum. Magee, vol. ii. p. 84. Good's Job, p. lxiv.

‡ Ilgen, Jobi antiquissimi Carminis Hebraici Natura atque Virtutes, cap. 3.

§ Introd. Diss. to Job, Section 2.

discriminated and well supported; the milder and more modest temper of Eliphaz (compare Job iv. 2, 3. with xvi. 3) is well contrasted with the forward and unrestrained violence of Bildad; the terseness and brevity of Zophar with the pent-up and overflowing fulness of Elihu; while in Job himself we perceive a dignity of mind that nothing can humiliate, a firmness that nothing can subdue, still habitually disclosing themselves amidst the tumult of hope, fear, rage, tenderness, triumph, and despair, with which he is alternately distracted. This hint is offered by Mr. Good, not with a view of ascribing any additional merit to the poem itself, but merely to observe, so far as a single fact is possessed of authority, that mental taste, or the internal discernment of real beauty, is the same in all ages and nations, and that the rules of the Greek critic are deduced from a principle of universal impulse and operation.

The dramatic form of this poem was strenuously affirmed by Calmet, Carpzov, and some other continental critics, and after them by Bishop Warburton; who, in support of this opinion, adduced the metrical form of its style, excepting in the introduction and conclusion,—its sentiments, which are delivered, not only in verse, but in a kind of poetry animated by all the sublimity and floridness of description, (whence he concludes this book to be a work of imagination),—and, in short, the whole form of its composition. Bishop Lowth has appropriated two entire lectures * to an examination of this question; and after inquiring whether the poem be possessed of any of the properties of the Greek drama, and considering a variety of circumstances which are here necessarily omitted, he affirms without hesitation, that the poem of Job contains no plot or action whatever, not even of the most simple kind; that it uniformly exhibits one constant change of things, without the smallest change of feature from beginning to end; and that it exhibits such a representation of manners, passions, and sentiments as might be naturally expected in such a situation. But though the book of Job is by no means to be considered as a drama written with fictitious contrivance; or as resembling in its construction any of those much-admired productions of the Grecian dramatic poets which it preceded by so many centuries—yet, he concludes, it may still be represented as being so far dramatic, as the parties are introduced speaking with great fidelity of character; and as it deviates from strict historical accuracy for the sake of effect. It is a complete though

* Lect. xxxiii. and xxxiv.

peculiar work, and regular in its subject as well as in the distribution of its parts: the exordium and conclusion are in prose, but all the intermediate dialogues are in metre. But, whatever rank may be assigned to Job in a comparison with the poets of Greece, to whom we must at least allow the merit of art and method; among the Hebrews it must certainly be allowed, in this respect, to be unrivalled. Such is a brief outline of Bishop Lowth's arguments and conclusions, which have been generally adopted.

It only remains that we notice the opinion of M. Bauer already referred to *, viz. that the book of Job approximates most nearly to the *Mekáma* or moral discourses of the philosophical Arabian poets. He has simply announced his hypothesis, without offering any reasons in its support: but the following considerations appear not unfavourable to the conjecture of Bauer. The *Mekáma* treats on every topic which presented itself to the mind of the poet, and though some parts are occasionally found in prose, yet it is generally clothed in all the charms of poetry which the vivid imagination of the author could possibly bestow upon it. The subjects thus discussed, however, are principally ethical. The Arabs have several works of this description, which are of considerable antiquity; but the most celebrated is the collection of *Mekámats*, composed by the illustrious poet Hariri †, which are read and admired to this day. Now, it will be recollected, that the scene of the book of Job is laid in the land of Uz or Idumea, in the Stony Arabia; the interlocutors are Edomite Arabs; the beginning and termination are evidently in prose, though the dialogue is metrical; the language is pure Hebrew, which we know for a considerable time was the common dialect of the Israelites, Idumeans, and Arabs, who were all descended from Abraham; the manners, customs, and allusions, too,

* See p. *supra*. The Arabic word *Mekáma* signifies an assembly and conversation, or discourse, (D'Herbelot Bibliothèque Orientale, vol. ii. p. 500): the name is derived from the circumstance of these compositions being read at the meetings or conversation of eminent literary characters.

† He composed his *Mekáma* or *Mecamát*, as D'Herbelot spells the word, at the request of Abu Shirvan Khaled, vizir of the Seljuk Sultan Mahmoud. It is esteemed a masterpiece of Arabian poesy and eloquence; and consists of fifty discourses or declamatory conversations on various topics of morality, each of which derives its name from the place where it was recited. So highly were these productions of Hariri valued, that Zamakshari, the most learned of the Arabian grammarians, pronounced that they ought only to be written on silk. The *Mekámats* of Hariri were published by Schultens, and six of his 'Assemblies' were translated into English from the Arabic, and published, by Professor Chappelow, in 8vo, London, 1767. See an account and extract from this work in the Monthly Review, (O. S.) vol. xxxvii. pp. 22—28.

which, it is well known, have not varied in any material degree, are supported by those of the modern Arabs. Since then the book of Job is allowed on all sides to be a poem, single and unparalleled in the sacred volume, may we not consider it as a prototype of the *Mekámat* of the Arabians? This conjecture, which is offered with deference to the names and sentiments of so many learned men, possesses at least one advantage; it furnishes a compromise between the opinions of the great critics who are divided in sentiment upon the class of poetry to which this book is to be referred, and perhaps reconciles difficulties which could not otherwise be solved respecting its real nature.

The reader will now determine for himself to which class of poetry this divine book is to be referred. After all that has been said, it is perhaps of little consequence whether it be esteemed a didactic or an ethic, an epic or dramatic poem; provided a distinct and conspicuous station be assigned to it in the highest rank of Hebrew poesy: for not only is the poetry of the book of Job equal to that of any other of the sacred writings, but it is superior to them all, those of Isaiah alone excepted. As Isaiah, says Dr. Blair, is the most sublime, David the most pleasing and tender, so Job is the most descriptive of all the inspired poets. A peculiar glow of fancy and strength of description characterize this author. No writer whatever abounds so much in metaphors. He may be said not only to describe, but to render visible, whatever he treats of. Instances of this kind everywhere occur, but especially in the eighteenth and twentieth chapters, in which the condition of the wicked is delineated. *

VII. The subject of this book is the history of a real sufferer, the patriarch Job, who at the period in question was an emir, or Arab prince of distinguished wealth, eminence, and authority, resident at Uz or Idumea. His three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, were also probably emirs of the cities or places whence they are denominated: but of Elihu, the fourth interlocutor in the poem, we have no notice whatever †. The principal

* Blair's Lectures, vol. iii. p. 188.

† From the circumstance of Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad being termed kings in the Septuagint version, some critics have supposed that they as well as Job were monarchs: but this conjecture is destitute of support. For, 1. Job is not represented as losing his kingdom, but his children, servants, and flocks; 2. He possessed no army or forces with which he could pursue the predatory Sabeans and Chaldeans; 3. Though his friends accused him of various crimes, and among others of harshly treating his servants, yet they no where charge him with tyranny towards his subjects; 4. Job gives an account

object offered to our contemplation in this production is the example of a good man, eminent for his piety, and of approved integrity, suddenly precipitated from the very summit of prosperity into the lowest depths of misery and ruin: who, having been first bereaved of his wealth, his possessions, and his children, is afterwards afflicted with the most excruciating anguish of a loathsome disease which entirely covers his body, (i. ii). He sustains all with the mildest submission, and the most complete resignation to the will of Providence: "In all this," says the historian, "Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly," (i. 22). And after the second trial, "In all this did not Job sin with his lips," (ii. 10). The author of the history remarks upon this circumstance a second time, in order to excite the observation of the reader, and to render him more attentive to what follows, which properly constitutes the true subject of the poem: namely, the conduct of Job with respect to his reverence for the Almighty, and the changes which accumulating misery might produce in his temper and behaviour. Accordingly we find that another still more exquisite trial of his patience yet awaits him, and which indeed, as the writer seems to intimate, he scarcely appears to have sustained with equal firmness, namely, the unjust suspicions, the bitter reproaches, and the violent altercations of his friends, who had visited him on the pretence of affording consolation. Here commences the plot or action of the poem: for when, after a long silence of all parties, the grief of Job breaks forth into passionate exclamations, and a vehement execration of the day of his birth, (iii.); the minds of his friends are suddenly exasperated, their intentions are changed, and their consolation, if indeed they originally intended any, is converted into contumely and reproaches. Eliphaz, the first of these three singular comforters, reproves his impatience; calls in question his integrity, by indirectly insinuating that God does not inflict such punishments upon the righteous; and finally, admonishes

of his private life and conduct towards his domestics, but is totally silent as to his conduct towards his subjects; lastly, when he does mention kings, (iii. 14. xxix. 25) he by no means places himself upon an equality with them. Hence we see the erroneousness of the appendix to the Septuagint version of Job, of which some notice is taken in p. 141, *infra*, and which makes him to be the same as Jobab king of the Edomites (Gen. xxxvi. 33). It is equally clear that Job was not subject to any sovereign, for neither he nor his friends make any mention of his allegiance to any king; on the contrary, when he entered the gate of the city where the magistrates sat in a judicial capacity, the first place was reserved to him, and his opinion was asked with the utmost deference. From all these circumstances, therefore, coupled with his extensive flocks and ample possessions, we conclude with Herder, Jahn, and Mr. Good, that he was *emir*, prince, or chief magistrate of the city of Uz.

him that the chastisement of God is not to be despised, (iv. v). The next of them, not less intemperate in his reproofs, takes it for granted, that the children of Job had only received the reward due to their offences; and with regard to himself, intimates, that if he be innocent, and will apply with proper humility to the divine mercy, he may be restored, (viii). The third upbraids him with arrogance, with vanity, and even with falsehood, because he has presumed to defend himself against the unjust accusations of his companions, and exhorts him to a sounder mode of reasoning, and a more holy life, (xi). They all, with a manifest though indirect allusion to Job, discourse very copiously concerning the divine judgments, which are always openly displayed against the wicked, and of the certain destruction of hypocritical pretenders to virtue and religion. In reply to this, Job enumerates his sufferings, and complains bitterly of the inhumanity of his friends, and of the severity which he has experienced from the hand of God; he calls to witness both God and man, that he is unjustly oppressed; he intimates, that he is weak in comparison with God, that the contention is consequently unequal, and that, be his cause ever so righteous, he cannot hope to prevail, (vi. vii). He expostulates with God himself still more vehemently, and with greater freedom, affirming, that he does not discriminate characters, but equally afflicts the just and the unjust, (x). The expostulations of Job serve only to irritate still more the resentment of his pretended friends; they reproach him in severer terms with pride, impiety, passion, and madness; they repeat the same arguments respecting the justice of God, the punishment of the wicked, and their certain destruction after a short period of apparent prosperity. This sentiment they confidently pronounce to be confirmed both by their experience, and by that of their fathers; and they maliciously exaggerate the ungrateful topic by the most splendid imagery and the most forcible language, (xi). On the part of Job, the general scope of the argument is much the same as before, but the expression is considerably heightened; it consists of appeals to the Almighty, asseverations of his own innocence, earnest expostulations, complaints of the cruelty of his friends, melancholy reflections on the vanity of human life, and upon his own severe misfortunes, ending in grief and desperation: he affirms, however, that he places his ultimate hope and confidence in God: and the more vehemently his adversaries urge that the wicked only are objects of the divine wrath, and obnoxious to punishment, so much the more resolutely does Job assert their perpetual impunity, prosperity, and happiness, even to the end of their existence. The first of his

opponents, Eliphaz, incensed by this assertion, descends directly to open crimination and contumely; he accuses the most upright of men of the most atrocious crimes, of injustice, rapine, and oppression; inveighs against him as an impious pretender to virtue and religion, and with a kind of sarcastic benevolence exhorts him to penitence. Vehemently affected with this reproof, Job, in a still more animated and confident strain, appeals to the tribunal of All-seeing Justice, and wishes it were only permitted him to plead his cause in the presence of God himself. He complains still more intemperately of the unequal treatment of Providence; exults in his own integrity, and then more tenaciously maintains his former opinion concerning the impunity of the wicked. To this another of the triumvirate, Bildad, replies, by a masterly though concise dissertation on the majesty and sanctity of the Divine Being, indirectly rebuking the presumption of Job, who has dared to question his decrees. In reply to Bildad, Job demonstrates himself no less expert at wielding the weapons of satire and ridicule than those of reason and argument; and reverting to a more serious tone, he displays the infinite power and wisdom of God more copiously and more poetically than the former speaker. The third of the friends making no return, and the others remaining silent, Job at length opens the true sentiments of his heart concerning the fate of the wicked; he allows that their prosperity is unstable, and that they and their descendants shall at last experience on a sudden that God is the avenger of iniquity. In all this, however, he contends that the divine counsels do not admit of human investigation, but that the chief wisdom of man consists in the fear of God. He beautifully descants upon his former prosperity; and exhibits a striking contrast between it and his present affliction and debasement. Lastly, in answer to the crimination of Eliphaz, and the implications of the others, he relates the principal transactions of his past life; he asserts his integrity as displayed in all the duties of life, and in the sight of God and man; and again appeals to the justice and omniscience of God in attestation of his veracity.

If these circumstances be fairly collected from the general tenor and series of the work, as far as we are able to trace them through the plainer and more conspicuous passages, it will be no very difficult task to explain and define the subject of this part of the poem, which contains the dispute between Job and his friends. The argument seems chiefly to relate to the piety and integrity of Job, and turns upon this point, whether he, who by the divine providence and visitation is so

severely punished and afflicted, ought to be accounted pious and innocent. This leads into a more extensive field of controversy, into a dispute indeed, which less admits of any definition or limit, concerning the nature of the divine counsels, in the dispensations of happiness and misery in this life. The antagonists of Job in this dispute, observing him exposed to such severe visitations, conceiving that this affliction had not fallen upon him unmeritedly, accuse him of hypocrisy, and falsely ascribe to him the guilt of some atrocious but concealed offence. Job, on the contrary, conscious of no crime, and wounded by their unjust suspicions, defends his own innocence before God with rather more confidence and ardour than is commendable; and so strenuously contends for his own integrity, that he seems virtually to charge God himself with some degree of injustice.*

The argument of Job's friends may, in substance, be comprised in the following syllogism:

God, who is just, bestows blessings upon the godly, but afflicts the wicked:

But Job is most heavily afflicted by God:

Therefore Job is wicked, and deserves the punishment of his sins; and therefore he is bound to repent, that is, to confess and bewail his sins.

To the major proposition Job replies, that *God afflicts not only the wicked, but also the pious*, in order that their faith, patience, and other virtues may be proved, and that the glory of God may become more conspicuously manifest in their wonderful deliverances. But, overwhelmed with grief and the cruel suspicions of his friends, he defends his cause with hard and sometimes impatient expressions.

This state of the controversy is clearly explained by what follows: for when the three friends have ceased to dispute with Job, "because he seemeth just in his own eyes," (xxxii. 1.) that is, because he has uniformly contended that there was no wickedness in himself which could call down the heavy vengeance of God; Elihu comes forward, justly offended with both parties; with Job, "because he justified himself in preference to God," (xxxii. 2. compare xxxv. 2. xl. 8.) that is, because he defended so vehemently the justice of his own cause, that he seemed in some measure to arraign the justice of God; against the three friends, because, "though they were unable to answer Job, they ceased not to condemn him," (xxxiii. 3.) that is, they concluded in their own minds that Job was impious and wicked, while, nevertheless, they had nothing specific to object

* Lowth's Lectures, No. xxxii. vol. ii. p. 371—378.

against his assertions of his own innocence, or upon which they might safely ground their accusation.

The conduct of Elihu evidently corresponds with this state of the controversy: he professes, after a slight prefatory mention of himself, to reason with Job, unbiassed equally by favour or resentment. He therefore reproves Job from his own mouth, because he had attributed too much to himself; because he had affirmed himself to be altogether free from guilt and depravity; because he had presumed to contend with God, and had not scrupled to insinuate, that the Deity was hostile to him. He asserts, that it is not necessary for God to explain and develope his counsels to men; that he nevertheless takes many occasions of admonishing them, not only by visions and revelations, but even by the visitations of his Providence, by sending calamities and diseases upon them, to repress their arrogance and reform their obduracy. He next rebukes Job, because he had pronounced himself upright, and affirmed that God had acted inimically, if not unjustly, towards him, which he proves to be no less improper than indecent. In the third place, he objects to Job, that from the miseries of the good, and the prosperity of the wicked, he has falsely and perversely concluded, that there was no advantage to be derived from the practice of virtue. On the contrary, he affirms, that when the afflictions of the just continue, it is because they do not place a proper confidence in God, ask relief at his hands, patiently expect it, nor demean themselves before him with becoming humility and submission. This observation alone, he adds very properly, is at once a sufficient reproof of the contumacy of Job, and a full refutation of the unjust suspicions of his friends, (xxxv. 4). Lastly, he explains the purposes of the Deity in chastening men, which are in general to prove and to amend them, to repress their arrogance, to afford him an opportunity of exemplifying his justice upon the obstinate and rebellious, and of showing favour to the humble and obedient. He supposes God to have acted in this manner towards Job: on that account he exhorts him to humble himself before his righteous Judge, to beware of appearing obstinate or contumacious in his sight, and of relapsing into a repetition of his sin. He entreats him, from the contemplation of the divine power and majesty, to endeavour to retain a proper reverence for the Almighty. To these frequently intermitted and often repeated admonitions of Elihu, Job makes no return.

The address of God himself follows that of Elihu, in which, disdaining to descend to any particular explication of his divine counsels, but instancing some of the stupendous effects

of his infinite power, he insists upon the same topics which Elihu had before touched upon. In the first place, having reproved the temerity of Job, he convicts him of ignorance, in being unable to comprehend the works of his creation, which were obvious to every eye; the nature and structure of the earth, the sea, the light, and the animal kingdom. He then demonstrates his weakness, by challenging him to prove his own power by emulating any single exertion of the divine energy, and then referring him to one or two of the brute creation, with which he is unable to contend—how much less therefore with the Omnipotent Creator and Lord of all things, who is or can be accountable to no being whatever, (xli. 2, 3). *

The scope of this speech is, to humble Job, and to teach others by his example to acquiesce in the dispensations of Jehovah, from an unbounded confidence in his equity, wisdom, and goodness:—an end this, which (Bishop Stock truly remarks) is indeed worthy of the interposition of Deity. The method pursued in the speech to accomplish its design, is a series of questions and descriptions, relative to natural things, admirably fitted to convince this complainant, and all others, of their incapacity to judge of God's moral administration, and of the danger of striving with their Maker. Nothing, in the whole compass of language, can equal, much less surpass, the inimitable grandeur and sublimity of this divine address, which extends from chapter xxxviii. to xli.

On the conclusion of the speech of Jehovah, Job humbles himself before God, acknowledging his own ignorance and imbecility, and “repents in dust and ashes.” He then offers sacrifice for his friends, and is restored to redoubled prosperity, honour, and comfort.

From a due consideration of all these circumstances, Bishop Lowth concludes, that the principal object of the poem is this third and last trial of Job from the injustice and unkindness of his accusing friends; the consequence of which is, in the first place, the anger, indignation, and contumacy of Job, and afterwards his composure, submission, and penitence. The design of the poem is, therefore, to teach men, that, having a due respect to the corruption, infirmity, and ignorance of human nature, as well as to the infinite wisdom and majesty of God, they are to reject all confidence in their own strength, in their own righteousness, and to preserve on all occasions an

* Lowth's Lectures, No. xxxii. vol. ii. pp. 378—382.

unwavering and unsullied faith, and to submit with becoming reverence to his decrees. It is, however, to be carefully observed, that the subject of the dispute between Job and his friends differs from the subject of the poem in general: that the end of the poetical part differs from the design of the narrative at large. For, the Bishop remarks, although the design and subject of the poem be exactly as they are above defined, it may nevertheless be granted that the whole history, taken together, contains an example of patience, together with its reward: and he considers much of the perplexity in which the subject has been involved, as arising principally from this point not having been treated with sufficient distinctness by the learned.

Moldenhawer and some other critics have considered the passage in Job xix. 25—27, as a prediction of the Messiah. It cannot, however, be clearly shown that this book contains any prophecies, strictly so called; because the passages which might be adduced as prophetic, may also be considered as a profession of faith in a promised Redeemer, and concerning a future resurrection. A learned commentator of the present day has remarked that there are but few parts of the Old Testament which declare more explicitly the grand outlines of revealed truth, nay even of evangelical doctrine; so that they, who speak of it as consisting chiefly of natural religion, seem entirely to have mistaken its scope. The book of Job, he continues, is full of caution and encouragement to the tempted and afflicted, and of warning to those who hastily judge their brethren. It throws great light upon the doctrine of Providence, and upon the agency and influence of evil spirits under the control of God. In the patriarch Job we see an eminent type of the suffering and glorified Saviour, and a pattern of the believer's "passing through much tribulation to the kingdom of God. In short, the whole is replete with most important instruction; and among the rest we are reminded of the ill effects of acrimonious religious dispute. These four pious men argued together, till, becoming angry, they censured and condemned each other, and uttered many irreverent things concerning the divine character and government; and, having lost their temper, they would also have lost their labour, and have been at more variance than ever, if another method had not been taken to decide the controversy." *

* Scott's Preface to Job.

At the end of the Septuagint version of this book, after the account of Job's death (xlii. 16), there is the following addition: Γεγραπται δε, παλιν αναστησεσθαι αυτον, μεθ' ων ο Κυριος ανιστησιν — “*But it is written that he shall rise again along with those whom the Lord raiseth up.*” Where it was so written concerning Job, is not easily to be found, unless in his own celebrated confession, *I know that my REDEEMER liveth, &c.* (xix. 25—27). The remark, however, is so far of importance as it proves the popular belief of the doctrine *before* the coming of Christ — a belief, to which this inestimable book, we may rest assured, contributed not a little*. To this additional passage there is also annexed in the Septuagint version a subscription or appendix, containing a brief genealogical account of the patriarch, derived from an old Syriac version†, and identifying him with Jobab king of the Edomites, and consequently making him nearly contemporary with Moses. This subscription was received and credited by the pseudo-Aristeas, Philo, and Polyhistor: it was also believed in the time of Origen, and is preserved by Theodotion at the end of his version of the book of Job.

This genealogy is received by Calmet and Herder‡ as genuine, but is manifestly spurious: for not only was it never extant in the Hebrew copies, but, even admitting the genealogy in question to be prior to the time of our Saviour, it is too recent to be admitted as evidence in a fact of such remote antiquity, especially as it is drawn only from conjecture supported by the slender resemblance between the two names, Job and Jobab: and, when we consider that it is contradicted by the arguments already adduced to prove that the patriarch lived so many ages anterior to the great legislator of the He-

* Dr. Hales' Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book i. p. 102.

† This subscription is also said to be found in the Arabic version, and in the old Latin Vulgate translation of Job. The following version is given from the Septuagint in Bishop Walton's Polyglott, vol. iii. p. 86.—“This is translated out of a book in the Syrian language: for he dwelt in the land of Ausitis, on the confines of Idumea and Arabia. His first name was Jobab; and having married an Arabian woman, he had by her a son whose name was Ennon. Now he himself was the son of Zave, one of the sons of Esau; so that he was the fifth in descent from Abraham. Now these were the kings who reigned in Edom, over which country he also bare rule. The first was Balak the son of Beor, and the name of his city was Dannaba; and after Balak, Jobab, who is called Job; and after him, Asom, who was general over the region of Thæmanitis (Teman); and after him, Adad the son of Barad, who smote Madiam in the land of Moab; and the name of his city was Gethaim. And the friends who came to Job were Eliphaz, of the sons of Esau, king of the Thæmanites; Baldad, the sovereign of the Sauchians (Shuhites); and Sophar (Zophar), the king of the Minaians” (Naamathites).

‡ Calmet's Dictionary, vol. i. art. *Job*. Herder on Hebrew Poetry in M. R. (O. S.) vol. lxxx. p. 644.

brews*, as well as by the internal evidence derived from the poem itself respecting the rank and condition of Job†, we cannot doubt for a moment that the subscription is both erroneous and spurious.

VIII. Although the preceding view of the scope and argument will convey to the reader an accurate idea of this very antient, but in many passages confessedly obscure poem; yet the following rules contain so many useful hints for the right understanding of its contents, that, long as this section necessarily is, the author is unwilling to omit them. ‡

RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN STUDYING THE BOOK OF JOB.

1. "He that would rightly explain this book must, as much as he can, imagine himself in the same afflicted condition.

2. Every daring thought, or ardent expression, which occurs in the speeches of this afflicted and exasperated man, is not to be vindicated; yet, as he was a great man, and a prince, he may be allowed to use bold and animated language.

3. We shall certainly judge amiss, if we think every thing wrong which will not suit with the politeness of our manners. Allowance must be made for the simplicity of those times.

4. In judging of Job's character, we must set the noble strains of his piety against the unguarded expressions of his sorrow.

5. It is not his innocence, strictly speaking, which Job insists on, but his sincerity, (chap. vii. 20, 21).

6. Except their hard censures of Job, his friends speak well and religiously.

7. His friends encouraged Job to hope for a temporal deliverance, (chap. v. 18, &c. vii. 20, &c. xi. 14, &c.); but Job despaired of it, and expected his bodily disorder would terminate in death, (chap. vi. 11, 12; vii. 6, 7, 8. 21. xvii. 1. 13, 14, 15; xix. 10); though, in the increasing heat of the dispute, they seem to drop this sentiment in their following answers,

* § iii. pp. 119—124, *supra*.

† See pp. 121, 122, note, *supra*.

‡ These rules are extracted from Dr. John Taylor's Scheme of Scripture Divinity, chap. xxiii. in Bishop Watson's Collection of Theological Tracts, vol. i. pp. 97, 98. Dr. Taylor of Norwich was an eminent divine of the last century; "who yielded to few in command of temper, benevolent feeling, and deep acquaintance with the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures." His Scheme of Divinity, it is deeply to be regretted, was Arian, and therefore cannot be recommended to students, indiscriminately.

as if they supposed Job to be too bad to hope for any favour from God. He hoped, however, that his character would be cleared in the day of judgment; though he was greatly concerned that it could not be cleared before; that after a life led in the most conspicuous virtues, his reputation, in the opinion of his nearest friends, would set under a black cloud, and, with regard to the ignorant and profane, leave an odious reproach upon a profession of religion. This touched him to the heart, exasperated all his sufferings, and made him often wish, that God would bring him to his trial here in this life, that his integrity might be vindicated, and that all, friends and enemies, might understand the true end or design of God in his sufferings, and the honour of religion might be secured. (Chap x. ii. 2, 3). *Is it good unto thee, that thou shouldst—shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* who from my case take occasion to reproach and vilify true religion, and to confirm themselves in their wicked and idolatrous practices. (Chap. viii. 20—22. xi. 17—20. xvi. 9—11).

8. He could only affirm his integrity, but could give no special satisfactory reason, why God should afflict him in a manner so very extraordinary, and beyond all preceding cases that were ever known in the world. This very much perplexed and embarrassed his mind, and laid him under a great disadvantage in the dispute. And, for one thing, it is on this account that he is so earnest to come to a conference with God, to know his mind and meaning (chap. x. 2): *Show me wherefore thou contendest with me?* * He knew very well he could not absolutely justify himself before God (chap. ix. 2—17). *For he breaks me with a tempest, he multiplieth my wounds without a cause,* or without any apparent reason (chap. vii. 12. 20). The whole twenty-third chapter relates to this point; in which he wishes he could come to the dwelling-place of God (ver. 3), and spread his case before him, and argue about it at large (ver. 4), for he had turned his thoughts every way, and could make nothing of it (ver. 8, 9), only he was sure God knew he was an upright man (ver. 10—12). *But* (ver. 13) *he is in one* אֵלֹהִים or in unity, supreme above all others, absolutely entire, keeping his mind and designs to himself; *and none can turn,* or oblige him to alter his resolution. All that we can say is, that he doth whatever is agreeable to his own wisdom. For (ver. 14) what he hath resolved to inflict upon me he hath accomplished; and many such things he doth, of which he will not give us the reason. To the same purpose understand chap. xxvii.

* See Bishop Patrick's Paraphrase on Job x. 2—8.

2—4. 14. and chap. xxviii. 2. *He hath taken away my judgment*, i. e. the rule by which I might judge of the reason of my afflictions. This point, in reference to God, Elihu tells him (chap. xxxiii. 13) he had urged to no purpose, *seeing he gives no account of his matters*, or will not reveal to us the secrets of his providence.

9. In such a noble performance, if any thing seems to be said not in consistency, or not in character, we should rather suspect our own judgment, than the good sense of the author. *The fault is not in the book, but in our understanding.*

10. That sense which best agrees with the subject, or the point in hand, or which stands in the best connexion with the context, should always be judged the best sense."

— IX. Nothing, perhaps, has contributed more to render the poem of Job obscure, than the common division into chapters and verses; by which, not only the unity of the general subject, but frequently that of a single paragraph or clause, is broken. The commentators, critics, and analysts indeed are not agreed as to the exact number of parts of which it consists: thus Heidegger and the elder Carpzov institute two leading divisions, with a multitude of subdivisions; Van Til divides it into four leading parts, and Moldenhawer into three, with a number of subordinate heads. Mr. Good divides it into six books or parts; and Dr. Hales into five parts, independently of the exordium and conclusion: but as these are requisite to the unity of the book, it does not appear that they should be excluded from the arrangement. The poem, then, may be conveniently divided into six parts: The first of these contains the exordium or narrative part (ch. i. ii); the second comprises the *first* debate or dialogue of Job and his friends (iii—xiv); the third includes the *second* series of debate or controversy (xv—xxi); the fourth comprehends the *third* series of controversy (xxii—xxxii); in the fifth part Elihu sums up the argument (xxxii—xxxvii); and in the sixth part Jehovah determines the controversy; Job humbles himself, is accepted, and restored to health and prosperity (xxxviii—xlii).

PART I. The exordium, containing the narration of Job's circumstances and trials (ch. i. ii), which is written in prose.

1. The situation and circumstances of Job (i. 1—6).

2. The *first* trial of Job by Satan, with divine permission, in the loss of his property and children; the integrity of Job declared (i. 7—22).

3. The *second* trial of Job by Satan, in the severe affliction of his person (ii. 1—10), and the visit of his friends to console him.

PART II. The *first* dialogue or controversy between Job and his friends (iii—xiv).

1. The complaint of Job on his calamitous situation, which is the ground-work of the following arguments (iii).
2. The speech of Eliphaz, in which he reproves the impatience of Job, and insinuates that his sufferings were the punishment of some secret iniquity (iv. v).
3. Job's reply, in which he apologizes for the intemperance of his grief by the magnitude of his calamities, prays for speedy death, accuses his friends of cruelty, and expostulates with God, whose mercy he supplicates (vi. vii).
4. The argument of Eliphaz resumed by Bildad, who reproves Job with still greater acrimony, and accuses him of irreligion and impiety (viii).
5. Job's rejoinder, in which, while he acknowledges the justice and sovereignty of God, he argues that his afflictions are no proof of his wickedness, and in despair again wishes for death (ix. x). This passionate reply calls forth,
6. Zophar, who prosecutes the argument begun by Eliphaz, and continued by Bildad, with still greater severity; and exhorts him to repentance, as the only means by which to recover his former prosperity (xi).
7. The answer of Job, who retorts on his friends, censuring their pretensions to superior knowledge, and charging them with false and partial pleading against him, and appeals to God, professing his hope in a future resurrection (xii—xiv).

PART III. The *second* dialogue or controversy (xv—xxi), in which we have,

1. The argument renewed, nearly in the same manner as it had been commenced by Eliphaz, who accuses Job of impiety in justifying himself (xv).
2. Job's reply, who complains of the increasing unkindness of his friends, protests his innocency, and looks to death as his last resource (xvi. xvii).
3. Bildad, going over his former line of argument, with increased asperity applies it to Job, whose aggravated sufferings, he urges, are justly inflicted upon him (xviii).
4. Job's appeal to the sympathy of his friends, and from them to God; professing his faith in a future resurrection; he cautions his friends to cease from their invectives, lest God should chastise them (xix).

5. Job's appeal is retorted upon himself by Zophar (xx); to whom the patriarch replies by discussing at large the conduct of divine Providence, in order to evince the fallacy of Zophar's argument of the short-lived triumph of the wicked (xxi).

PART IV. The *third* debate or controversy (xxii—xxxix); in which,

1. Eliphaz resumes the charge, representing Job's vindication and appeal as displeasing to God; contends that certain and utter ruin is the uniform lot of the wicked, as was evinced in the destruction of the old world by the deluge; and concludes with renewed exhortation to repentance and prayer (xxii).

2. In reply, Job ardently desires to plead his cause before God, whose omnipresence he delineates in the sublimest language, urging that his sufferings were designed as trials of his faith and integrity; and he shows in various instances that the wicked frequently escape punishment in this life (xxiii. xxiv).

3. The rejoinder of Bildad, who repeats his former proposition, that, since no man is without sin in the sight of God, consequently Job cannot be justified in his sight (xxv).

4. The answer of Job, who, having reproved the harsh conduct of Bildad, re-vindicates his own conduct with great warmth and animation, and takes a retrospect of his former character in the relative situations of life, as a husband, as a master, and as a magistrate; and concludes by repeating his ardent wish for an immediate trial with his calumniator before the tribunal of God (xxvi—xxxix).

PART V. contains the summing up of the whole argument by Elihu, who, having condemned the conduct of all the disputants whose reasonings were not calculated to produce conviction (xxxii), proceeds to contest several of Job's positions, and to show that God frequently afflicts the children of men for the best of purposes, and that in every instance our duty is submission. He concludes with a grand description of the omnipotence of the Creator (xxxiii—xxxvii).

PART VI. The termination of the controversy, and the restoration of Job to his former prosperity (xxxviii—xlii); containing,

1. The appearance of Jehovah to pronounce judgment; who addresses Job, out of a whirlwind, in a most sublime

and magnificent speech, the substance of which is nearly a counter-part to that of Elihu. In it are illustrated the omnipotence of God, and man's utter ignorance of his ways, and works of creation and Providence (xxxviii—xli).

2. The submission of Job, which is accepted, his restoration to his former prosperity, and the increase of his substance to double (xlii. 1—10).

3. A more particular account of Job's restoration and prosperity (xlii. 11—17). *

X. Independently of the important instruction and benefit which may be derived from a devout perusal of the book of Job, this divine poem is of no small value, as transmitting to us a faithful delineation of the patriarchal doctrines of religion: and on this account, we trust, the reader will not be reluctantly detained, if we take a brief retrospect of the patriarchal creed — more especially, as some very learned men have denied that it contained any reference either to fallen angelic spirits, or to a future resurrection of the body from the grave, and consequently to a future state of existence.

The two grand articles of patriarchal faith, from the earliest days, according to Saint Paul (Heb. xi. 6), were, 1. *That there is a God*; and, 2. *That he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*. These articles are particularly contained in Job's declaration,

I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

But there are several other important points of doctrine either directly stated, or which may be legitimately inferred from different parts of this book: they may be reduced to the following nine articles.

1. *The creation of the world by one supreme, omnipresent, and eternal Being*, of boundless wisdom, irresistible power, indescribable glory, inflexible justice, and infinite goodness. This first great principle of what is usually called natural religion, is laid down throughout the whole book as an incontestable truth; but it is particularly illustrated in the speech of Jehovah himself, in Job xxxviii—xli.

* Dr. Hales is of opinion that the last six verses of this chapter, 11—17: (which particularize the increase of Job's family, the names of his daughters, who, according to primitive usage, were made co-heiresses with their brothers, together with the number of years during which he survived his trial) form an appendix; which was probably added in later times from tradition, either by Moses, who resided so long in his neighbourhood, or by Samuel, or by the person (whoever he was) that introduced the book into the sacred canon. *Analysis of Chronology*, vol. ii. book i. p. 101.

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2. *The government of the world by the perpetual and superintending providence of God.* This article of the patriarchal creed is particularly noticed in Job i. 9. 21; ii. 10. v. 8—27; ix. 4—13; and in almost every other chapter of the book: in every instance, this doctrine is proposed, not as a matter of nice speculation, but as laying mankind under the most powerful obligations to fear and serve, to submit to and trust in their Creator, Lord, and Ruler.

3. *That the providential government of the Almighty is carried on by the ministration of a heavenly hierarchy* (i. 6, 7; iii. 18, 19. v. 1; xxxiii. 22, 23), which is composed of various ranks and orders, possessing different names, dignities, and offices. *

4. *“An apostacy or defection in some rank or order of these powers* (iv. 18; xv. 15); of which Satan seems to have been one, and perhaps chief (i. 6—12; ii. 2—7).

5. *“The good and evil powers or principles, equally formed by the Creator, and hence equally denominated “Sons of God;” both of them employed by him in the administration of his Providence; and both amenable to him at stated courts, held for the purpose of receiving an account of their respective missions”* † (v. 6, 7; ii. 1).

6. *That Zabianism, or the idolatrous worship of the stars, was a judicial offence, cognizable by the pelilim or judges; who were arbitrators, consisting of the heads of tribes or families, appointed by common consent to try offences against the community, and to award summary justice* ‡. Such was the case of the Transjordanite tribes, who were suspected of apostasy, and were threatened with extirpation by the heads of the ten tribes on the western side of Jordan (Josh. xxii. 16—22). §

7. *Original sin, or “that corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam”* ||. “It is certain,” as Bishop Burnet has well remarked, “that in Scripture this general corruption of our nature is often mentioned” **: and it is not to be supposed that this article

* “As *obedim*, servants; *malachim*, angels; *melixim*, intercessors; *memitim*, destinies or destroyers; *alep*, the miliad or thousand; *kedosim*, *SANCTI*, the heavenly SAINTS or hosts generally.” Good’s Introd. Diss. to his version of Job, p. lxxv. See ch. iv. 18. xxxiii. 22, 23. v. 1. xv. 15. of his Translation, compared with p. lxxiv. of his Dissertation, and his notes on the passages cited.

† *Ibid.* p. lxxv.

‡ Job xxxi. 26—28. Dr. Hales, to whose researches we are indebted for the sixth article of the patriarchal creed, translates the 28th verse thus:

Even this would be a *judicial crime*,
For I should have lied unto GOD ABOVE.

§ Dr. Hales’ Analysis, vol. ii. book i. pp. 105, 106.

|| Article ix. of the Confession of the Anglican Church.

** Burnet on Art. ix. p. 139. Having cited several passages at length, he thus con-

of doctrine, however repugnant to the pride of man, should be omitted in the book of Job. Accordingly, we find it expressly asserted in chap. xiv. 4; xv. 14—16. and xxxv. 4.

8. *The offering of sacrifices to placate the divine anger, and render the Almighty propitious* (i. 5. xlii. 8), and the mediation and intercession of a righteous person (xlii. 8, 9). In his intercession for his friends, Job is generally regarded as a type of Him “who ever liveth to make intercession” for transgressors. If any evidence were wanting to prove sacrifices of divine institution, the declaration in xlii. 8. alone would be sufficient. *

9. *That there will be a day of future resurrection* (xiv. 7—11. with verses 12—15. of the same chapter), judgment (xix. 25—29), and retribution to all mankind (xxvii. 8. xxxi. 13, 14.)

The passage, in which Job expresses his firm faith in a Redeemer (xix. 25—29), has been greatly contested among critics; some of whom refer it simply to his deliverance from his temporal distresses, maintaining that it has no allusion whatever to a future state; while others understand it in the contrary sense, and consider it a noble confession of faith in the Redeemer. The latter opinion has been ably advocated by Pfeiffer, Michaelis, Velthusen, Mr. Good, and Dr. Hales, and is now generally received. The following is Dr. Hales’s version of this sublime passage of Job.

I know that my REDEEMER [*is*] living,
And that at the last [*day*]
He will arise [*in judgment*] upon dust [*mankind*]:
And after my skin be mangled thus,
Yet ever from my flesh shall I see God:
Whom I shall see for me [*on my side*],
And mine eyes shall behold him not estranged;
[*Though*] my reins be [*now*] consumed within me.
— But ye should say, “Why persecute we him [*further*].”
Since the strength of the argument is found in me,
Fear ye for yourselves, from the face of the sword;
For [*divine*] wrath [*punisheth*] iniquities [*with*] the sword;
That ye may know there is a judgment. †

cludes: “These, with many other places of Scripture to the same purpose, when they are joined to the *universal experience* of all mankind concerning the corruption of our whole race, lead us to settle this point, that in fact it *has* overrun our whole kind, the contagion *is* spread over all.”

* Dr. Magee has collected all the evidence on this important subject with great ability. Discourses on the Atonement, vol. ii. part i. pp. 25—46.

† Dr. Hales’ Analysis, vol. ii. pp. 83—86. For the very elaborate notes with which he has supported and vindicated his translation, we must refer the reader to his work. Besides the translations of Mr. Good, already referred to, there are some excellent observations on the doctrines of the patriarchal age, in Dr. Taylor’s Scheme of Scripture Divinity, chap. xxiv. (vol. i. pp. 98—104. of Bishop Watson’s Collection of Tracts). See also Pfeiffer’s *Dubia Vexata Scripturæ*, Centuria III. No. 39. Op. tom. i. pp. 269—272.

SECTION II.

ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

- I. *General title of this book*; — II. *Structure of the Psalms*; — III. *Their canonical authority*; — IV. *Authors to whom they are ascribed*, 1. *Moses*; — 2. *David*; — 3. *Asaph*; — 4. *The sons of Korah*; — 5. *Heman and Ethan*; — 6. *Solomon*; — 7. *Anonymous Psalms*; — *Chronological Arrangement of the Psalms by Calmet*; V. *Collection of the Psalms into a volume*; — VI. *The inscriptions or titles prefixed to the different Psalms*; — VII. *Probable meaning of the word Selah*; — VIII. *Scope of the book of Psalms*; — IX. *Rules for better understanding them*; — X. *A table of the Psalms classed according to their several subjects.*

I. **THIS** book is entitled in the Hebrew *Sepher Tehillim*, that is, the *Book of Hymns* or *Praises*; because the praises of God constitute their chief subject-matter: and as they were set, not only to be sung with the voice, but also to be accompanied with musical instruments, the Septuagint version designates them Βιβλος Ψαλμων, the *Book of Psalms*, by which name they are cited in Luke xx. 42; and this appellation is retained in our Bibles. In the Alexandrian manuscript of the Septuagint, this book is entitled Ψαλτήριον, the *Psalter*, from the psaltery, one of the musical instruments in use when the psalms were sung: but in the Vatican manuscript it is simply called Ψαλμοι, the *Psalms*. The Syriac version denominates it the “*Book of Psalms of David, King and Prophet*,” and the Arabic version, “*the Book of Psalms of David the Prophet, King of the sons of Israel.*”

II. The book of Psalms presents every possible variety of Hebrew poetry. They may all, indeed, be termed poems of the lyric kind, that is, adapted to music, but with great variety in the style of composition. Thus some are simply odes. “*An ode is a dignified sort of song, narrative of the facts, either of public history, or of private life, in a highly adorned and figured style. But the figure in the Psalms is that, which is peculiar to the Hebrew language, in which the figure gives its meaning with as much perspicuity as the plainest speech* *.” Others, again, are *ethic* or *didactic*, “*delivering grave maxims of life, or the precepts of religion, in solemn, but for the most*

* Bishop Horsley's Translation of the Psalms, vol. i. p. xv.

part simple, strains." To this class we may refer the hundred and nineteenth, and the other *alphabetical psalms*, which are so called because the initial letters of each line or stanza followed the order of the alphabet*. Nearly one-seventh part of the psalms are elegiac, or pathetic compositions on mournful subjects. Some are enigmatic, delivering the doctrines of religion in enigmata, sentences contrived to strike the imagination forcibly, and yet easy to be understood; while a few may be referred to the class of idyls, or short pastoral poems†. But the greater part, according to Bishop Horsley, is a sort of dramatic ode, consisting of dialogues between certain persons sustaining certain characters. "In these dialogue-psalms the persons are frequently the psalmist himself, or the chorus of priests and Levites, or the leader of the Levitical band, opening the ode with a proem declarative of the subject, and very often closing the whole with a solemn admonition drawn from what the other persons say. The other persons are, Jehovah, sometimes as one, sometimes as another of the three persons; Christ in his incarnate state, sometimes before, sometimes after his resurrection; the human soul of Christ, as distinguished from the divine essence. Christ, in his incarnate state, is personated sometimes as a priest, sometimes as a king, sometimes as a conqueror; and, in those psalms in which he is introduced as a conqueror, the resemblance is very remarkable between this conqueror in the book of Psalms, and the warrior on the white horse in the book of Revelations, who goes forth with a crown on his head and a bow in his hand, conquering and to conquer. And the conquest in the Psalms is followed, like the conquest in the Revelations, by the marriage of the conqueror. These are circumstances of similitude, which, to any one versed in the prophetic style, prove beyond a doubt that the mystical conqueror is the same personage in both‡."

III. The right of the book of Psalms to a place in the sacred canon has never been disputed: they are frequently alluded to in the Old Testament, and are often cited by our Lord and his apostles as the work of the Holy Spirit. They are generally termed the Psalms of David, that Hebrew monarch being their chief author. Origen, Chrysostom, Au-

* The alphabetical psalms are xxv. xxxiv. xxxvii. cxi. cxii. cxix. and cxlv. On the peculiar structure of the Hebrew alphabetical poems, see pp. 103—106. *supra*, of this volume.

† On the nature of this kind of poem, see p. 112 of the present volume.

‡ Bishop Horsley's Psalms, vol. i. p. xvi.

gustine, Ambrose, Euthymius *, and others of the antient fathers, indeed, were of opinion that he was their sole author: but they were opposed by Hilary and Athanasius †, (or the author of the synopsis attributed to him), Jerome, Eusebius, and other fathers of equal eminence. And indeed this notion is manifestly erroneous, for an attentive examination of the Psalms will immediately prove them to be the compositions of various authors, in various ages, some much more antient than the time of David, some of a much later age; and others were evidently composed during the Babylonish captivity. Some modern commentators have even referred a few to the time of the Maccabees: but for this opinion, as we shall show in a subsequent page ‡, there does not appear to be any foundation. Altogether they embrace a period of about nine hundred years.

The earliest composer of sacred hymns unquestionably was Moses (Exod. xv); the next, who are mentioned in the Scriptures, are Deborah (Judg. v) and Hannah (1 Sam. ii): but it was David, himself, an admirable composer and performer in music (1 Sam. xvi. 18. Amos vi. 5), who gave a regular and noble form to the musical part of the Jewish service, and carried divine poetry and psalmody to perfection; and therefore he is called the sweet psalmist of Israel (2 Sam. xxiii. 1). He, doubtless by divine authority, appointed the singing of psalms by a select company of skilful persons, in the solemn worship of the tabernacle (1 Chron. vi. 31. xvi. 4—8); which Solomon continued in the first temple (2 Chron. v. 12, 13), and it was re-established by Ezra, as soon as the foundation of the second temple was laid (Ezra iii. 10, 11). Hence the Jews became well acquainted with the songs of Sion; and, having committed them to memory, were celebrated for their melodious singing among the neighbouring countries (Psal. cxxxvii. 3). The continuance of this branch of divine worship is confirmed by the practice of our Lord, and the instructions of Saint Paul (Matt. xxvi. 30. Mark xiv. 26. Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. compared with Rev. v. 9. xiv. 1, 2, 3); and the practice of divine

* Chrysostom in Psal. i. Ambros. Præfat. in Psal. i. Augustin. de Civitate Dei, lib. xvii. c. 14. Theodoret, Præf. in Psal. Cassiodorus, Proleg. in Psal. Euthymius, Præf. in Psal. Philastrius, Hæres. 129. Huet, Dem. Ev. tom. i. prop. iv. p. 330.

† Hilarii Proleg. in Psal. et Comment. in Psal. cxxxi. Athanasii Synopsis. Hieronymi Epist. ad Sophronium. Eusebii Cæsariensis Præf. in Psalmos, p. 7, 8. et in Inscript. Psal. p. 2. et in Psal. xli. lx. lxii. Calmet, Pref. Générale sur les Pseaumes, (Com. tom. iv. p. iv. v). Huet, *ut supra*.

‡ See pp. 157, 158, *infra*.

psalmody has subsisted through every succeeding age to our own time, not more to the delight than to the edification of the church of Christ. "There are indeed at this time" (to use the words of a sensible writer *) "very few professing Christians who do not adopt these sacred hymns in their public and private devotions, either by reading them, composing them as anthems, or singing poetical translations and imitations of them. In this particular there ever has existed, and there still exists, a wonderful communion of saints. The language, in which Moses, and David, and Solomon, Heman, Asaph, and Jeduthun, worshipped God, is applicable to Christian believers. They worship the same God through the same adorable Redeemer; they give thanks for similar mercies, and mourn under similar trials; they are looking for the same blessed hope of their calling, even everlasting life and salvation, through the prevailing intercession of the Messiah. The antient believers, indeed, worshipped him as about to appear; we adore him as having actually appeared, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. They saw, as through a glass, darkly; but we face to face."

IV. The Jewish writers ascribe the book of Psalms to *ten* different authors †, viz. Adam, to whom they assign the ninety-second psalm; Abraham, whom they call Ethan, and give to him the eighty-ninth psalm; Moses, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and the three sons of Korah; and they make David to be merely the collector of them into one volume or book. But this opinion is evidently fabulous: for, 1. The ninety-second psalm, which is ascribed to Adam, appears from its internal structure and style to be David's, though no author is mentioned in its title or inscription: besides, if Adam had left any sacred odes, it is more than probable that some notice would have been taken of them in the book of Genesis, which however is totally silent concerning any such compositions. 2. That the hundred and tenth psalm, which is attributed to Melchizedec, was certainly written by David, is evident, not only from the title which claims him for its author, but also from its style and manner, which correspond with the acknowledged productions of the royal prophet; and especially from the testimony of Jesus Christ and his apostle Peter (Matt. xxii. 43—45. Mark xii. 36. Luke xx. 42. Acts ii. 34). And, 3. It is most certain

* The editor of the 4to Bible of 1810, with the notes of several of the venerable reformers.

† Francisci Junii Proleg. ad Librum Psalmorum, § 2.

that David was the author of very many psalms, not merely of those which have his name in their respective titles, but likewise of several others, to which his name is not prefixed, especially of psalms ii. and xcv. as we are assured by the inspired apostles (Acts iv. 25, 26. Heb. iv. 7). To make David, therefore, merely the collector and editor of those divine compositions, is alike contradictory to the clearest evidence, derived from the book of Psalms itself, and from the testimony of the inspired writers of the New Testament, as well as contrary to the whole current of antiquity.

A careful investigation of these divine odes will enable us to form a better opinion concerning their respective authors, whom the modern Jews, and all modern commentators, understand to be Moses, David, Solomon, Asaph, Heman, Ethan, Jeduthun, and the three sons of Korah. Other authors have been conjectured by some eminent critics, whose hypotheses will presently be noticed.

1. To MOSES the Talmudical writers ascribe *ten* psalms, viz. from xc. to xcix. inclusive. The ninetieth psalm, in the Hebrew manuscripts, is inscribed with his name; and from its general coincidence in style and manner with his sacred hymns in Exod. xv. and Deut. xxxii. it is in all probability the composition of the great lawgiver of the Jews, and was made when God shortened the days of the murmuring Israelites in the wilderness (Numb. xiv). It may have been preserved along with the Pentateuch, and have subsequently been inserted in the book of Psalms when they were collected together. The other nine psalms, xci. to xcix. are attributed to Moses by the Jews, by virtue of a canon of criticism which *they* have established, namely, that all anonymous psalms are to be referred to that author whose name occurred in the title last preceding them *. But for this rule no foundation whatever exists: it is certain that the ninety-ninth psalm could not have been written by Moses, for in the sixth verse mention is made of the prophet Samuel, who was not born till two hundred and ninety-five or six years after the death of Moses.

2. The name of DAVID is prefixed to seventy-one psalms in the Hebrew copies, to which the Septuagint version adds eleven others; but it is evident, from the style and subject-

* This opinion is very antient: it was adopted by Origen (Select. in Psalmos, Opp. tom. ii. p. 574. edit. Benedict) and by Jerome, (Epist. cxxxix. ad Cyprianum, p. 388, edit. Plantin) who says it was derived from a tradition recorded by Iullus, patriarch of the Jews. Advers. Ruffin. lib. i. cap. 3. p. 235. Rosenmüller, Scholia in Psalmos, tom. i. p. xii.

matter of the latter, that many of them cannot be the composition of David, particularly the hundred and second, which is in no respect whatever applicable to him, but from its subject-matter must be referred to some pious Jew, who composed it after the return from the Babylonish captivity, while the temple was in ruins, and the country in a state of desolation. The hundred and thirty-eighth psalm also, though attributed in the Septuagint to David, could not have been written by him, for reference is made in it to the *temple*, which was not erected till after his death by Solomon. On the contrary, some of the psalms thus ascribed to David in the Septuagint version are unquestionably his, as well as some which are anonymous: of the former class is the ninety-fifth, and of the latter, the second psalm, both of which are cited as David's psalms by the inspired writers of the New Testament. Compare Acts iv. 25—28. xiii. 33. Heb. iii. 7—11. iv. 7—13.

Many of the psalms, which bear the royal prophet's name, were composed on occasion of remarkable circumstances in his life, his dangers, his afflictions, his deliverances. "But of those which relate to the public history of the natural Israel, there are few in which the fortunes of the mystical Israel are not adumbrated; and of those which allude to the life of David, there are none in which the Son of David is not the principal and immediate subject. David's complaints against his enemies are Messiah's complaints, first of the unbelieving Jews, then of the heathen persecutors, and of the apostate faction in later ages. David's afflictions are Messiah's sufferings. David's penitential supplications are Messiah's, under the burden of the imputed guilt of man. David's songs of triumph and thanksgiving are Messiah's songs of triumph and thanksgiving, for his victory over sin, and death, and hell. In a word, there is not a page of this book of Psalms, in which the pious reader will not find his Saviour, if he reads with a view of finding him." *

From the variety of circumstances and situations in which David was placed at different times, and the various affections which consequently were called into exercise, we may readily conceive that his style is exceedingly various. The remark, indeed, is applicable to the entire book of Psalms, but eminently so to the odes of David. Hence it is that those, which are expressive of the natural character and state of man, and of sin, seem to bear marks of difficulty, and, as it were, disgust

* Bishop Horsley's Psalms, vol. i. p. x.

in their composition. "The sentences are laboured, and move heavily, and cannot be perused with that lively pleasure, which, on the contrary, is received from those themes of the psalmist which place before us the glorious attributes of God, and express, either His love to man, or the believer's love to Him. These strains flow with vigorous and well-adapted expressions, as if the subject was felt to be most delightful, entered on with alacrity, and pursued with holy joy*." Some of David's psalms possess great sublimity, as the twenty-fourth; but softness, tenderness, and pathos are their prevailing characteristics.

3. With the name of Asaph, a very celebrated Levite, and chief of the choirs of Israel in the time of David (1 Chron. xvi. 4, 5), twelve psalms are inscribed, viz. l. lxxiii—lxxxiii. But the seventy-fourth and seventy-ninth psalms evidently cannot be his, because they deplore the overthrow of Jerusalem and the conflagration of the temple, and in point of style approach nearest to the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Either, therefore, they are erroneously ascribed to him, or were composed by another Asaph, who lived during the captivity. The subjects of Asaph's psalms are doctrinal or preceptive: their style, though less sweet than that of David, is much more vehement, and little inferior to the grandest parts of the prophecies of Isaiah and Habakkuk.

4. Eleven psalms, viz. xlii—xlvii. lxxxiv. lxxxv. lxxxvii. and lxxxviii. are inscribed, "*For the sons of KORAH:*" but such is the uncertainty of the prepositional prefix, that it is not easy to decide whether these psalms were written *by* them, or were composed *for* them, and to be performed by them with music in the temple. As the names of the musical instruments, with which these psalms were to be accompanied, are specified in the titles of Psalms xlvi. and lxxxviii. to which last is added the name of Heman, it is most probable that they were directed to the sons of Korah; but by whom they were composed is not now known. The same remark is applicable to psalms xxxix. lxii. and lxxvii. the titles of which are inscribed to Jeduthun, who was one of the three directors of music in the national worship. See 1 Chron. xxv. 1.

* Memorial Sketches of the late Rev. David Brown, p. 93.—a very instructive piece of clerical biography. Mr. B., to whom we are indebted for the above remark, was most accurately intimate with the Psalms in their original Hebrew. "He accustomed himself to them," says his biographer, "in the original, as the medium of his most private and earnest devotions, whether of contrition, supplication, or praise. In all affliction, and in all rejoicing, he alike called upon God in the language of David." Ibid.

5. To Heman the Ezrahite is ascribed the eighty-eighth psalm; and to Ethan the Ezrahite, the following psalm. They were both probably descendants from Zerah, who is mentioned in 1 Chron. ii. 6; but at what time they lived is uncertain. They are, however, supposed to have flourished during the Babylonish captivity.

6. It is highly probable that many of the psalms were composed during the reign of Solomon, who, we learn from 1 Kings iv. 32, wrote a thousand and five songs," or poems. There are only two psalms, however, which bear his name, viz. the seventy-second and the hundred and twenty-seventh psalm. The title of the former may be translated *for* as well as *of* Solomon: and indeed it is evident, from considering its style and subject-matter, that it could not have been composed by him. But, as he was inaugurated just before David's death, it was in all probability one of David's latest odes. The hundred and twenty-seventh psalm is most likely Solomon's, composed at the time of his nuptials; it strongly and beautifully expresses a sense of dependence upon Jehovah for every blessing, especially a numerous offspring, which we know was an object of the most ardent desire to the Israelites.

7. Besides the preceding, there are upwards of thirty psalms which in the Hebrew Bibles are altogether anonymous, although the Septuagint version gives names to some of them, chiefly, it should seem, upon conjecture, for which there is little or no foundation. Thus, the Alexandrian Greek translators ascribe the hundred and thirty-seventh psalm to Jeremiah, who could not have written it, for he died before the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, which joyous event is most pleasingly commemorated in that ode. In like manner, the hundred and forty-sixth and hundred and forty-seventh psalms are attributed by them to the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, for no other reason, it should seem, than because Psal. cxlvi. 7—10, treats of the deliverance of the captives and those who were oppressed, and cxlvii. of the restoration of the Jewish church. Psalms ii. and xcv. however, as we have already remarked*, though anonymous, are ascribed by the inspired apostles to David. Some modern critics have imagined, that there are a few of the untitled psalms, which were composed so lately as the time of the Maccabees. Thus, Rudinger assigns to that period psalms i. xlv. xlvii. xlix. and cviii; Herman Vonder Hardt, psalm cxix; and Venema, psalms lxxxv. xciii.

* See p. 154, *supra*.

and cviii *. But this late date is impossible, the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures being closed by Ezra, nearly three centuries before the time of the Maccabees. But “whether David, or any other prophet, was employed as the instrument of communicating to the church such or such a particular psalm, is a question, which, if it cannot always be satisfactorily answered, needs not disquiet our minds. When we discern, in an epistle, the well-known hand of a friend, we are not solicitous about the pen with which it was written.” †

The following chronological arrangement of the Psalms, after a careful and judicious examination, has been adopted by Calmet ‡, who has further specified the probable occasions on which they were composed.

1. *Psalms of which the date is uncertain.* These are eight in number, viz.

Psal. i. This is a preface to the whole book, and is by some ascribed to David, by others to Ezra, who is supposed to have collected the Psalms into a volume.

Psal. iv. The expressions of a devout person amid the corrupt manners of the age. An evening prayer.

Psal. viii. The prerogatives of man; and the glory of Jesus Christ.

Psal. xix. A beautiful eulogy on the law of God. A psalm of praise to the Creator, arising from a consideration of his works, as displayed in the creation, in the heavens, and in the stars.

Psal. lxxxi. This psalm, which is attributed to Asaph, was sung in the temple, at the feast of trumpets, held in the beginning of the civil year of the Jews, and also at the feast of tabernacles.

Psal. xci. This moral psalm, though assigned to Moses, was in all probability composed during or after the captivity. It treats on the happiness of those who place their whole confidence in God.

Psal. cx. The advent, kingdom, and generation of the Messiah; composed by David.

Psal. cxxxix. A psalm of praise to God for his all-seeing providence and infinite wisdom.

* Rosenmüller (Scholia in Psalmos, tom. i. p. xix) adopts this untenable hypothesis of Rudinger's.

† Bishop Horne's Commentary on the Psalms, vol. i. Pref. p. v.

‡ Commentaire Littéral, tom. iv. pp. lxii—lxvi. As some of the psalms in the Vulgate Latin version, which was used by Calmet, are divided and numbered in a different manner from that in which they appear in our Bibles, we have adapted the references to the psalms to the authorized English version.

2. *Psalms composed by David during the persecution of Saul.*
These are seventeen; namely,

Psal. xi. David, being entreated by his friends to withdraw from the court of Saul, professes his confidence in God.

Psal. xxxi. David, proscribed by Saul, is forced to withdraw from his court.

Psal. xxxiv. Composed by David, when, at the court of Achish king of Gath, he counterfeited madness, and was permitted to depart.

Psal. lvi. Composed in the cave of Adullam, after David's escape from Achish.

Psal. xvi. David persecuted by Saul, and obliged to take refuge among the Moabites and Philistines.

Psal. liv. David pursued by Saul in the desert of Ziph, whence Saul was obliged to withdraw and repel the Philistines. David's thanksgiving for his deliverance.

Psal. lii. Composed by David after Saul had sacked the city of Nob, and put the priests and all their families to the sword.

Psal. cix. Composed during Saul's unjust persecution of David. The person, against whom this psalm was directed, was most probably Doeg. Bishop Horsley considers it as a prophetic malediction against the Jewish nation. *

Psal. xvii. A prayer of David during Saul's bitterest persecution of him.

Psal. xxii. David, persecuted by Saul, personates the Messiah, persecuted and put to death by the Jews.

Psal. xxxv. Composed about the same time, and under the same persecution.

Psal. lvii. David, in the cave of En-gedi, implores divine protection, in sure prospect of which he breaks forth into grateful praise (1 Sam. xxiv. 1).

Psal. lviii. A continuation of the same subject. Complaints against Saul's wicked counsellors.

Psal. cxlii. David in the cave of En-gedi.

Psal. cxl. cxli. David, under severe persecution, implores help of God.

Psal. vii. David violently persecuted by Saul.

* On the imprecations supposed to be contained in this psalm, see Vol. I. p. 474, *supra*.

3. *Psalms composed by David at the beginning of his reign, and after the death of Saul.* Of this class there are sixteen, viz.

Psal. ii. Written by David, after he had fixed the seat of his government at Jerusalem, notwithstanding the malignant opposition of his enemies. It is a most noble prediction of the kingdom of the Messiah.

Psal. lxviii. Composed on occasion of conducting the ark from Kirjath-Jearim to Jerusalem.

Psal. ix. and xxiv. Sung by David on the removal of the ark from the house of Obededom to mount Sion.

Psal. ci. David describes the manner in which he guided his people in justice and equity.

Psal. xxix. A solemn thanksgiving for the rain that fell, after David had avenged the Gibeonites on the house of Saul, by whom they had been unjustly persecuted, 2 Sam. xxi. 1, *et seq.*

Psal. xx. Composed by David when he was on the point of marching against the Ammonites and Syrians, who had leagued together against him, 2 Sam. x.

Psal. xxi. A continuation of the preceding subject. David's thanksgiving for his victory over the Ammonites.

Psal. vi. xxxviii. and xxxix. Composed by David during sickness: although no notice is taken of this sickness in the history of David, yet it is the opinion of almost every commentator that these psalms refer to some dangerous illness, from which his recovery was long doubtful.

Psal. xl. A psalm of thanksgiving for his recovery from sickness.

Psal. li. xxxii. and xxxiii. were all composed by David after Nathan had convinced him of his sin with Bathsheba. *

4. *Psalms during the rebellion of Absalom.* This class comprises eight psalms.

Psal. iii. iv. lv. Composed when David was driven from Jerusalem by Absalom.

Psal. lxii. David professes his trust in God during the unnatural persecution of his son.

Psal. lxx. lxxi. A prayer of David when pursued by Absalom.

* Dr. Hales refers to this period psalm ciii, which is a psalm of thanksgiving. He considers it as David's eucharistical ode, after God had pardoned his great sin. Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. pp. 376, 377.

Psal. cxliii. Written during the war with Absalom.

Psal. cxliv. A thanksgiving for his victories over Absalom, Sheba, and other rebels. 2 Sam. xviii. 20.

5. *The psalms, written between the death of Absalom and the captivity, are ten in number, viz.*

Psal. xviii. David's solemn thanksgiving for all the blessings he had received from God. Compare 2 Sam. xxii.

Psal. xxx. Composed on occasion of dedicating the altar on the threshing-floor of Araunah. 2 Sam. xxiv. 25.

Psal. xlv. Composed on the marriage of Solomon with a king's daughter. It is throughout prophetic of the victorious Messiah.

Psal. lxxviii. Composed on occasion of Asa's victory over the forces of the king of Israel. See 2 Chron. xvi. 4. 6.

Psal. lxxxii. Instructions given to the judges, during the reign of Jehoshaphat king of Judah. See 2 Chron. xix. 5, 6.

Psal. lxxxiii. A triumphal ode, composed on occasion of Jehoshaphat's victory over the Ammonites, Moabites, and other enemies. See 2 Chron. xx. 1, *et seq.*

Psal. lxxvi. Composed after the destruction of Sennacherib's army. See 2 Chron. xxxii.

Psal. lxxiv. and lxxix. A lamentation for the desolation of the temple of Jerusalem: it was most probably composed at the beginning of the captivity.

6. *Psalms composed during the captivity; the authors of which are unknown.* Calmet ascribes them chiefly to the descendants of Asaph and Korah. Their subjects are wholly of a mournful nature, lamenting the captivity, imploring deliverance, and complaining of the oppression of the Babylonians. These psalms, forty in number, are as follow: x. xii. xiv. xv. xxv. xxvi. xxvii. xxviii. xxxvi. xxxvii. xlii. xliii. xlv. xlix. l. liii. lx. lxiv. lxvii. lxix. lxxiii. lxxv. lxxvii. lxxx. lxxxiv. lxxxvi. lxxxviii. lxxxix. xc. xcii. xciii. xciv. xcv. xcix. cxx. cxxi. cxxiii. cxxx. cxxxi. cxxxii.

7. *Psalms composed after Cyrus issued his edict, allowing the Jews to return from their captivity.* This class consists of thanksgiving odes for their release, and also on occasion of dedicating the walls of the city, as well as of the second temple. They abound with the most lively expressions of devotion and gratitude, and amount to fifty-one, viz. cxxii. lxi. lxiii. cxxiv. xxiii. lxxxvii. lxxxv. xlvi. xlvii. xlviii. xcvi. to cxvii. inclusive, cxxvi. cxxxiii. to cxxxvii. inclusive, cxlix. cl. cxlvi. cxlvii. cxlviii. lix. lxv. lxvi. lxvii. cxviii. cxxv. cxxvii. cxxviii. cxxix. cxxxviii.

According to this distribution of Calmet, only forty-five of these psalms were composed by David.

V. At what time and by whom the book of Psalms was collected into one volume, we have no certain information. Many are of opinion that David collected such as were extant in his time into a book for the use of the national worship: this is not unlikely, but it is manifest that such a collection could not include *all* the psalms, because many of David's odes are scattered throughout the entire series. Some have ascribed the general collection to the friends or servants of Hezekiah before the captivity: but this could only apply to the psalms *then* extant, for we read that Hezekiah caused the *words* or psalms of David to be sung in the temple when he restored the worship of Jehovah there (2 Chron. xxix. 25—30); the collection by the men of Hezekiah could not comprize any that were composed either under or subsequent to the captivity. That the psalms were collected together at different times and by different persons, is very evident from an examination of their contents. Accordingly, in the Masoretic copies, and also in the Syriac version, they are divided into five books; the *first* of which comprises psalms i. to xl; the *second* xli. to lxxii; the *third* lxxii. to lxxxix; the *fourth* xc. to cvi; and the *fifth* cvii. to cl. The four first books end with the words, "*Amen and Amen*"*; the fifth, with "*Hallelujah.*" This division is very antient, because it was in existence before the Septuagint Greek version was executed†; and as there are many Chaldee words in those composed during or after the Babylonish captivity, the most probable opinion is, that the different collections then extant were formed into one volume by Ezra, when the Jewish canon of Scripture was completed. But whatever subordinate divisions may have existed, it is

* After the words, "*Amen and Amen,*" in psalm lxxii. the following sentence is subjoined: "*The prayers of David the son of Jesse*" are ended; by which are generally understood the Psalms of David in that collection, because there are several of his in the following collections. Bishop Horsley, however, is of opinion, that this is the close of the particular psalm in question, and not a division of the book, as if these first seventy-two psalms were all of David's composition. "The sense is, that David the son of Jesse had nothing to pray for or to wish beyond the great things described in this psalm. Nothing can be more animated than this conclusion. Having described the blessings of Messiah's reign, he closes the whole with this magnificent doxology:—

Blessed be Jehovah God,
God of Israel, alone performing wonders;
And blessed be his name of glory,
And let his glory fill the whole of the earth.
Amen and Amen.

Finished are the prayers of David, the son of Jesse."

Bishop Horsley's Psalms, vol. ii. p. 195.

† Eusebius and Theodoret, in their respective Prefaces to the book of Psalms, consider this book as ranking next in priority to the Pentateuch; on which account it was divided into five parts or books, like the writings of Moses.

certain that the psalms composed but one book in that canon : for they are cited by our Lord collectively as the “ *Psalms*” (Luke xxiv. 44), and also as “ *the book of Psalms*” (Luke xx. 42), by which last title they are cited by Saint Peter in Acts i. 20 ; and they are reckoned only as one book in all subsequent enumerations of the Scriptures, both by Jews and Christians.

The number of the canonical psalms is one hundred and fifty : but, in the Septuagint version, as well as in the Syriac, Arabic, and Æthiopic translations, there is extant another, which is numbered CLI. Its subject is the combat of David with Goliath (related in 1 Sam. xvii), but it is evidently spurious ; for, besides that it possesses not a particle of David’s genius and style, it never was extant in the Hebrew, and has been uniformly rejected by the fathers, and by every council that has been held in the Christian church. *

Although the number of the psalms has thus been ascertained and fixed, yet, between the Hebrew originals and the Greek and Vulgate Latin versions, there is considerable diversity in their arrangement and distribution. In the latter, for instance, what is numbered as the *ninth* psalm forms two distinct psalms, namely, ix. and x. in the Hebrew ; the tenth psalm commencing at verse 22 of the Greek and Latin translations : so that, from this place to the hundred and thirteenth psalm *inclusive*, the quotations and numbers of the Hebrew are different from these versions. Again, psalms cxiv. and cxv. of the Hebrew form but one psalm in the Greek and Latin, in which the hundred and sixteenth psalm is divided into two. In the Greek and Latin copies also, the hundred and forty-seventh psalm is divided into two, thus completing the number of one hundred and fifty. The Protestant churches, and our authorized English version, adhere to the Hebrew notation, which has been invariably followed in the present work.

VI. To most of the psalms † are prefixed INSCRIPTIONS OR

* The following is a translation of this pretended psalm, from the Septuagint :

“ *This psalm on David (was) written by himself, and in prose, when he fought in single combat with Goliath.*

“ I was little among my brethren, and the youngest of my father’s family. My hands
“ had made an organ, and my fingers had tuned a psaltery. But who will tell my Lord ?
“ My Lord himself heareth. He sent his messenger, and took me from my father’s
“ flocks, and anointed me with anointing oil. My brothers were comely and great ; but
“ the Lord did not delight in them. I went out to meet the Philistine, and he cursed
“ me by his idols. But I drew his own sword, and cut off his head, and took away re-
“ proach from the children of Israel.”—How vapid ! how unlike the songs of Sion com-
posed by the sweet psalmist of Israel !

† The number of Psalms without titles in the Hebrew Scriptures is twenty-five, viz. i. ii. x. xxiv. xxxiii. xliii. lxxi. xci. xciii. to xcix. inclusive, civ. cv. cvii. cxiv. to cxix. in-

TITLES, concerning the import of which, expositors and interpreters are by no means agreed. Some hold them in the profoundest reverence, considering them as an original part of these divine odes, and absolutely necessary to the right understanding of them, while others regard the titles as subsequent additions, and of no importance whatever. In one thing only are they all unanimous, namely, in the obscurity of these titles.

That *all* the inscriptions of the psalms are canonical and inspired, we have no authority to affirm. Augustine, Hillary, Theodoret, Cassiodorus, and many other antient fathers, admit that they have no relation to the body of the psalm, and that they contribute nothing to the sense. The Septuagint and other Greek versions have added titles to some of the psalms, which have none in the Hebrew: the Protestant and Catholic churches have determined nothing concerning them. If the titles of the psalms had been esteemed canonical, would it have been permitted to alter them, to suppress them, or to add to them? Which of the commentators, Jewish or Christian, Catholic or Protestant, thinks it incumbent upon him to follow the title of the psalm in his commentary? And yet both Jews and Christians receive the book of Psalms as an integral part of Holy Writ.

Although, therefore, many of the titles prefixed to the psalms are of very questionable authority, as not being extant in Hebrew manuscripts, and some of them are undoubtedly not of equal antiquity with the text, being, in all probability, conjectural additions; yet, we have no reason to suppose that very many of them are not canonical parts of the psalms; because they are perfectly in unison with the Oriental manner of giving titles to books and poems.

It is well known that the seven poems, composed in Arabic by as many of the most excellent Arabian bards (and which, from being originally suspended around the caaba or temple at Mecca, were called *Moallakāt*, or *suspended*), were called *al Modhadhebat*, or the golden verses, because they were written in characters of gold on Egyptian paper.

Might not the six psalms, which bear the title of *Michtam*,

clusive, cxxxvi. and cxxxvii: by the Talmudical writers they are termed *orphan psalms*. The untitled psalms in our English version amount to thirty-seven; but many of these are Hallelujah psalms, which have lost their inscriptions, because the venerable translators have rendered the Hebrew word Hallelujah by the expression "Praise the Lord," which they have made a part of the psalm, though in the Septuagint version it stands as a distinct title.

or golden *, be so called on account of their having been on some occasion or other written in letters of gold, and hung up in the sanctuary? D'Herbelot, to whom we are indebted for the preceding fact, also relates that Sherfeddin al Baussiri, an Arabian poet, called one of his poems in praise of Mohammed, (who, he affirmed, had cured him of a paralytic disorder in his sleep)—*the Habit of a Derveesh*; and, because he is there celebrated for having (as it is pretended) given sight to a blind person, this poem is also entitled by its author *the Bright Star* †. D'Herbelot further tells us that a collection of moral essays was named *the Garden of Anemonies*.

The antient Jewish taste, Mr. Harmer remarks, may reasonably be supposed to have been of the same kind: and agreeable to this is the explanation given, by some learned men, of David's commanding the *bow* to be taught the children of Israel (2 Sam. i. 18); which, they apprehend, did not relate to the use of that weapon in war, but to the hymn which he composed on occasion of the death of Saul and Jonathan; and from which they think that he entitled this elegy the *Bow*. The twenty-second psalm might in like manner be called *the Hind of the Morning* (*Aijelet Shabar*); the fifty-sixth, *the Dumb in distant places* (*Joneth-elemrechokim*); the sixtieth, *the Lily of the Testimony* (*Shushan-eduth*); the eightieth, *the Lilies of the Testimony* (*Shoshannim-eduth*), in the plural number; and the forty-fifth, simply the *Lilies* (*Shoshannim*). That these appellations do not denote musical instruments, Mr. Harmer is of opinion, is evident from the names of trumpet, timbrel, harp, psaltery, and other instruments with which psalms were sung, being *absent* from those titles. If they signify tunes (as he is disposed to think,) they must signify the tunes to which such songs or hymns were sung as were distinguished by these names: and so the inquiry will terminate in this point, whether the psalms to which these titles are affixed, were called by these names, or whether they were

* Psalms vi. lvi. lvii. lviii. lix. lx. Dr. Herbelot, Bibliothèque Orientale, vol. i. pp. 383. 415.

† Ibid. vol. ii. p. 624. It were easy to multiply examples of this kind from the works of Oriental writers; a few must suffice. In Casiri's list of works written by the celebrated Spanish Arab statesman Ibn-ū-l-Khatib, this author's *History of Granada* is entitled *a Specimen of the Full Moon*; his *Chronology of the Kings of Africa and Spain* has the lofty appellation of the *Silken Vest embroidered with the Needle*; his *Lives of eminent Spanish Arabs*, who were eminent for their learning and virtue, are termed *Fragrant Plants*; a *Tract on Constancy of Mind* is *Approved Butter*; and, to mention no more, a *Treatise on the Choice of Sentences* is designated *Pure Gold*. These works are still extant among the Arabic manuscripts preserved in the library of the Escorial. Casiri, Bibliotheca Arabico-Escorialensis, tom. ii. p. 72. The *Gulistān*, *Bed of Roses*, or *Flower Garden* of the Persian poet Sady, has been translated into English by Mr. Gladwin; and the *Bahar Danush*, or *Garden of Knowledge*, of the Persian bard Einaut-Oollah, by Mr. Scott.

some other psalms or songs, to the tune of which these were to be sung. Now, as we do not find the bow referred to, nor the same name twice made use of, so far as our information goes, it seems most probable that these are the names of the very psalms to which they are prefixed. The forty-second psalm it may be thought, might very well have been entitled the *Hind of the Morning*; because, as that panted after the water-brooks, so panted the soul of the psalmist after God: but the twenty-second psalm, it is certain, might equally well be distinguished by this title—“*Dogs have encompassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me*”; and, as the psalmist, in the forty-second psalm, rather chose to compare himself to an *hart* than an *hind* (see verse 1), the twenty-second psalm much better answers this title, in which he speaks of his hunted soul in the feminine gender, *Deliver my soul from the sword, my darling* (which in the original is feminine) *from the power of the dog*. Every one that reflects on the circumstances of David, at the time to which the fifty-sixth psalm refers (see 1 Sam. xxi. 11—15. xxii. 1), and considers the Oriental taste, will not wonder to see that psalm entitled the *dumb in distant places*; nor are *lilies* more improper to be made the title of other psalms, with proper distinctions, than a garden of *anemonies* is to be the name of a collection of moral discourses. †

Besides the psalms, whose titles have thus been considered and explained, there are *forty-five* called *Mismor*, or *psalms*; viz. iii. iv. v. vi. viii. ix. xii. xiii. xv. xix. xx. xxi. xxii. xxiii. xxiv. xxix. xxxi. xxxvii. xxxix. xl. xli. xlvii. xlix. l. li. lxii. lxiii. lxiv. lxxiii. lxxv. lxxvii. lxxix. lxxx. lxxxii. lxxxiv. lxxxv. xcvi. c. ci. cix. cx. cxxxix. cxl. cxli, and cxliii. One is called *Shir*, or *song* (psal. xlv). Seven are called *Mismor Shir*, or *psalm-songs*, viz. xxxi. lxv. lxvii. lxviii. lxxv. lxxvii. and xcii; and five are called *Shir-Mismor*, or *song-psalms*, xlviii. lxvi. lxxxiii. lxxxviii. and cviii. In what respects these titles differed, it is now impossible to ascertain, as Rabbi Kimchi, one of the most learned Jews, ingenuously acknowledges: but we may infer that they combined both music and singing, which are indicated by the respective words *psalm* and *song*, with some modifications. In the Septuagint version, these are called *a psalm of an ode*, and *an ode of a psalm*. *Four* are called

* According to Dr. Shaw, the Eastern mode of hunting is, by assembling great numbers of people, and enclosing the creatures they hunt. *Travels in Barbary and the Levant*, 4to. p. 235, or vol. i. pp. 422, 423, 8vo edit.

† Harmer's *Observations*, vol. iii. pp. 146—149.

Thephilah, or *prayers*, namely, xvii. lxxxvi. xc. and cii: and the hundred and forty-fifth psalm is called *Tehillah*, or *praise*. So excellent, indeed, was this composition always accounted, that the title of the whole Book of Psalms, *Sepher Tehillim*, or the Book of Praises, was taken from it. It is wholly filled with the praises of God, expressed with such admirable devotion, that the antient Jews used to say, "He could not fail of being an inhabitant of the heavenly Canaan, who repeated this psalm three times a day." *

Fifteen psalms, cxx. to cxxxiv. are entitled *Shir Hammachaloth*, literally *Songs of the Steps* (in our English version, *Songs of Degrees*); or, as Bishop Lowth terms them, *Odes of Ascension* †. They are supposed to have derived this name from their being sung, when the people *came up* either to worship in Jerusalem, at the annual festivals, or perhaps from the Babylonish captivity. In Ezra vii. 9, the *return* from captivity is certainly called "*the ascension, or coming up from Babylon.*" The hundred and twenty-sixth psalm favours the latter hypothesis: but, as some of these odes were composed *before* the captivity, the title may refer to either of these occasions, when the Jews *went up* to Jerusalem, which, it will be recollected, stood on a steep *rocky ascent*, in large companies, after the Oriental manner, and perhaps beguiled their way by singing these psalms. For such an occasion, Jahn remarks ‡, the appellation of ascensions was singularly adapted, as the inhabitants of the East, when speaking of a journey to the metropolis of their country, delight to use the word *ascend*.

To ten psalms, viz. cvi. cxi. cxii. cxiii. cxxxv. and cxlvi. to cl. inclusive, is prefixed the title *Hallelujah*, which, as already intimated, forms part of the first verse in our English translation, and is rendered—*Praise the Lord*.

The title, *Maschil* is prefixed to psalms xxxii. xlii. xlv. lii. liii. liv. lv. lxxiv. lxxviii. lxxxviii. lxxxix. and cxlii: and as it is evidently derived from the Hebrew root שָׁכַל *shakal*, to be wise, to behave wisely or prudently, Calmet thinks it merely signifies to give instruction, and that the psalms to which it is prefixed are peculiarly adapted to that purpose: Rosenmüller coincides with him, as far as his remark applies to psalm xxxii. but rather thinks it a generic name for a particular kind of poem.

* Bishop Patrick, *in loc.* And therefore he thinks it was composed alphabetically, *i. e.* every verse beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, in order that it might be the more readily committed to memory.

† Bishop Lowth, *Prælect. xxv. in fine.*

‡ Introd. ad Vet. Fœd. pp. 471, 472.

It only remains that we briefly notice those psalms, whose titles are generally considered as names, either of musical instruments or of tunes. The first of these is *Neginoth*, which is prefixed to psalms iv. vi. liv. lv. lx. lxi. lxxvi: it signifies stringed instruments of music to be played on by the fingers. Calmet proposes to translate the titles of those psalms, where this word is to be found, in the following manner: *A psalm of David, to the master of music who presides over the stringed instruments.*

2. *Nehiloth*, which is in the title of psalm v., is supposed to have been a wind instrument; but whether of the organ kind as Rosenmüller thinks, or of the flute kind as Calmet supposes, it is now impossible to determine. 3. *Sheminith* (psal. vi. and xii) is supposed to have been an octochord or harp, of eight strings: from the circumstance of its being united with the *Neginoth* in the title of psalm vi. it is supposed to have been an accompaniment to the latter instrument. 4. *Shiggaion* (psal. vii.) according to Houbigant, Parkhurst, and some others, means a wandering song; and is so called, because it was composed by David when a fugitive from the persecution of Saul. But Calmet says that it signifies a song of consolation in distress, synonymous with an *elegy*: with him coincide Dr. Kennicott and Rosenmüller, who derive the word from an Arabic root, importing, that the inspired author of this psalm was overwhelmed with sorrow and anxiety at the time he composed it. 5. *Gittith* (psal. viii. lxxxi. lxxxiv), according to Rabbi Jarchi, signifies a musical instrument brought from Gath: but, as the original Hebrew denotes *wine-presses*, Calmet thinks it probably is an air or song which was sung at the time of vintage. Rosenmüller prefers the former derivation: both, however, may be true. The instrument bearing this name might have been used by the people of Gath, from whom it might have been adopted by the Jews, with whom it afterwards became a favourite instrument during the festivity and dances of the vintage. 6. For *Muthlabben*, which appears in the title of psalm ix. upwards of twenty manuscripts of Dr. Kennicott's collation, and more than forty of De Rossi's, read *almuth*, which signifies virgins. Calmet thinks that a chorus of virgins is intended, and that *La Ben*, that is, *to Ben*, refers to Ben or Benaiah, who was their precentor, and who is mentioned in 1 Chron. xv. 18. 20. 7. *Mahalath* (psal. liii.) denotes a dance, such as was used at some peculiar festivals and occasions. (Compare Exod. xv. 20. Judg. xxi. 21. 1 Sam. xviii. 6). According to Calmet, the title of this ode is—"An instructive psalm of David for the chief mas-

ter of dancing; or, for the chorus of singers and dancers." *Mahalath-Leannoth* (psal. lxxxix.) probably means a responsive psalm of the same description.*

VII. Of the word SELAH, which occurs upwards of seventy times in the book of Psalms, and three times in the prophecy of Habakkuk, it is by no means easy to determine the meaning: in the Septuagint it occurs still more frequently, being placed where it does not occur in the Hebrew original, and rendered by *διαψαλμα*, *diapsalma*, which signifies a rest or pause, or, according to Suidas, a change of the song or modulation. Some imagine that it directed the time of the music, and was perhaps equivalent to our word *slow*, or, according to some of our provincial dialects, '*slaw*;' which, in a rapid pronunciation, might easily be taken for Selah. Dr. Wall conjectures that it is a note, directing that the last words to which it is added, should be repeated by the chorus; and observes, that it is always put after some remarkable or pathetic clause. Parkhurst and others are of opinion, that it was intended to direct the reader's particular attention to the passage: others, that it makes a new sense or change of the metre. Jerome says, that Selah connects what follows with what went before, and further expresses that the words to which it is affixed are of eternal moment; that is, are not applicable to any particular person or temporary circumstances, but ought to be remembered by all men, and for ever; whence the Chaldee paraphrast renders it "for ever." Aquila, Symmachus, Geier, Forster, Buxtorf, and others, are of opinion that Selah has no signification, but that it is a note of the antient music, the use of which is now lost. Aben Ezra says, that it is like the conclusion of a prayer, answering nearly to amen. Meibomius, and after him Jahn, think that it means a repeat, and that it is equivalent to the Italian *Da Capo*. Calmet is of opinion that the antient Hebrew musicians sometimes put Selah in the margin of their psalters, to show where a musical pause was to be made, and where the tune ended: just as in the copies of the Gospels† which were solemnly read in the early ages of the Christian church, the Greek word *Τελος*, *telos*, or the Latin word *finis*, was written in the margin, either at length or with a contraction, to mark the place where the deacon was to *end* the lesson; the divisions of chapters and verses being

* Calmet, *Commentaire Littérale*, tom. iv. pp. xi—xiv. lii—liv. Rosenmüller *Scholia in Psalmos*, tom i. cap. 4. *De Psalmorum Inscriptionibus, et Explicatio Dictionum in Psalmorum Titulis obviarum*, pp. xxv—lviii.

† Simon, *Histoire Critique du Nouv. Test.* ch. xxiii.

unknown at that time: or else, he thinks, the antient Hebrews sang nearly in the same manner as the modern Arabians do *, with long pauses, ending all at once, and beginning all at once; and therefore it was necessary, in the public services, to mark in the margin of the psalm as well the place of the pause as the end, in order that the whole choir might suspend their voices, or recommence their singing at the same time. Rosenmüller, after Herder and A. F. Pfeiffer, declares in favour of *Selah* being a rest or pause, for the vocal performers, during which the musical instruments only were to be heard. Mr. Hewlett thinks it resembled our concluding symphonies. It only remains that we notice the sentiment of Rabbi Kimchi, which has been adopted by Grotius and others; and which, amid this conflict of opinions, appears to us more probable than any, as it reconciles several of them. That eminent Jewish teacher says, that *Selah* is both a musical note, and a note of emphasis in the sense, by which we are called to observe something more than usually remarkable. It is derived from the Hebrew word *שָׁלַל* *salal*, which signifies he raised or elevated; and denotes the elevation of the voice in singing; and at the same time the lifting up of the heart, the serious considering and meditating upon the thing that is spoken.

That this word was of use in music and singing is evident from the manner in which, we have already remarked, it was rendered by the Septuagint translators: and that it is also a mark of observation and meditation, may be inferred from its being joined in psal ix. 16. with the word *Higgaion*, which signifies meditation. Now, though in some passages *Selah* may appear to be used where there is no emphatic word or sense, yet it may be applied not only to the immediately preceding word or verse, but also to the whole series of verses or periods to which it is subjoined. And if it be thus considered, we shall find that it is used with great propriety, and for the best of purposes, viz. To point out to us something well worthy of our most attentive observation; and that it calls upon us to revolve in our minds, with great seriousness, the matter placed before us. †

VIII. In praise of the Psalms, all the fathers of the church are unanimously eloquent. Athanasius styles them an epitome

* D'Arvieux's Travels in Arabia the Desart, p. 52. English translation, 1718, 12mo.

† Calmet, Dissertation sur Sela, tom. iv. p. xvi—xviii. Hewlett *in loc.* Rosenmüller, Scholia in Psalmos, tom. i. pp. lix—lxii. Dr. John Edwards, on the Authority, Style, and Perfection of Scripture, vol. iii. p. 373. Jahn, Introd. ad Vet. Fœd. p. 471.

of the whole Scriptures; Basil, a compendium of all theology; Luther, a little Bible, and the summary of the Old Testament; and Melancthon, the most elegant writing in the whole world. How highly the Psalter was valued subsequently to the Reformation, we may easily conceive by the very numerous editions of it which were executed in the infancy of printing, and by the number of commentators who have undertaken to illustrate its sacred pages. Carpzov, who wrote just one century ago, enumerates upwards of one hundred and sixty; and, of the subsequent modern expositors of this book, it would perhaps be difficult to procure a correct account. "The Psalms," as their best interpreter in our language has remarked, with equal piety and beauty*, "are an epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purposes of devotion. They treat occasionally of the creation and formation of the world; the dispensations of Providence, and the economy of grace; the transactions of the patriarchs; the exodus of the children of Israel; their journey through the wilderness, and settlement in Canaan; their law, priesthood, and ritual; the exploits of their great men, wrought through faith; their sins and captivities; their repentances and restorations; the sufferings and victories of David; the peaceful and happy reign of Solomon; the advent of Messiah, with its effects and consequences; his incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom, and priesthood; the effusion of the Spirit; the conversion of the nations; the rejection of the Jews; the establishment, increase, and perpetuity of the Christian church; the end of the world; the general judgment; the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with their Lord and King. These are the subjects here presented to our meditations. We are instructed how to conceive of them aright, and to express the different affections, which, when so conceived of, they must excite in our minds. They are, for this purpose, adorned with the figures, and set off with all the graces of poetry; and poetry itself is designed yet farther to be recommended by the charms of music, thus consecrated to the service of God; that so delight may prepare the way for improvement, and pleasure become the handmaid of wisdom, while every turbulent passion is calmed by sacred melody, and the evil spirit is still dispossessed by the harp of the son of Jesse. This little volume, like the paradise of Eden, affords us in perfection, though in miniature, every thing that groweth elsewhere, every tree that is pleasant

* The late Bishop Horne.

to the sight, and good for food;" and above all, what was there lost, but is here restored—*the tree of life in the midst of the garden*. That which we read, as matter of speculation, in the other Scriptures, is reduced to practice, when we recite it in the Psalms; in those repentance and faith are described, but in these they are acted: by a perusal of the former, we learn how others served God, but, by using the latter, we serve him ourselves. "What is there necessary for man to know," says the pious and judicious Hooker, "which the Psalms are not able to teach? They are to beginners an easy and familiar introduction, a mighty augmentation of all virtue and knowledge in such as are entered before, a strong confirmation to the most perfect among others. Heroical magnanimity, exquisite justice, grave moderation, exact wisdom, repentance unfeigned, unwearied patience, the mysteries of God, the sufferings of Christ, the terrors of wrath, the comforts of grace, the works of Providence over this world, and the promised joys of that world which is to come, all good necessarily to be either known, or done, or had, this one celestial fountain yieldeth. Let there be any grief or disease incident unto the soul of man, any wound or sickness named, for which there is not, in this treasure-house, a present comfortable remedy at all times ready to be found*." In the language of this divine book, therefore, the prayers and praises of the church have been offered up to the throne of grace, from age to age. And it appears to have been the manual of the Son of God, in the days of his flesh; who, at the conclusion of his last supper, is generally supposed, and that upon good grounds, to have sung an hymn taken from it†; who pronounced, on the cross, the beginning of the twenty-second psalm, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and expired, with a part of the thirty-first psalm in his mouth, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." Thus He, who had not the Spirit by measure, in whom were hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and who spake as never man spake, yet chose to conclude his life, to solace himself in his greatest agony, and at last to breathe out his soul, in the psalmist's form of words, rather than his own. No tongue of man or angel, as Dr. Hammond justly observes, can convey an

* Hooker Ecclesiast. Pol. b. v. sec. 37.

† Saint Matthew informs us, chap. xxvi. 30. that he and his apostles "sung an hymn;" and the hymn usually sung by the Jews, upon that occasion, was what they called "the great Hallel," consisting of the psalms from the cxiiith to the cxviiith inclusive.

higher idea of any book, and of their felicity who use it aright." *

The number of psalms, which are *throughout* more eminently and directly prophetical of the Messiah, is indeed comparatively small: but the passages of *particular* psalms which are predictive of him in various ways are very numerous, no part of the Old Testament being cited in the New so frequently as this book. That those psalms which were composed by David himself were prophetic, we have David's own authority; "which," Bishop Horsley remarks, "may be allowed to overpower a host of modern expositors. For thus King David, at the close of his life, describes himself and his sacred songs: "David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised upon high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, the Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was in my tongue" (2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2). It was the word, therefore, of Jehovah's Spirit which was uttered by David's tongue. But, it should seem, the Spirit of Jehovah would not be wanting to enable a mere man to make complaint of *his own enemies*, to describe *his own sufferings just as he felt them*, and *his own escapes just as they happened*. But the Spirit of Jehovah described, by David's utterance, what was known to that Spirit only, and that Spirit only could describe. So that, if David be allowed to have had any knowledge of the true subject of his own compositions, it was nothing in his own life, but something put into his mind by the Holy Spirit of God; and the misapplication of the psalms to the literal David has done more mischief, than the misapplication of any other parts of the Scriptures, among those who profess the belief of the Christian religion." †

For a table of those portions of the Psalms which are strictly prophetical of the Messiah, see Vol. I. p. 516 of this work.

IX. The book of Psalms, being composed in Hebrew verse, must generally be studied and investigated agreeably to the structure of Hebrew poetry: but, in addition to the remarks already offered on this subject ‡, there are a few observations more particularly applicable to these songs of Sion, which

* Bishop Horne on the Psalms, vol. i. Preface, p. i—iv.

† Bishop Horsley's Psalms, vol. i. p. xiv. Calmet has a very fine passage on the scope of the book of Psalms, as pointing to the Messiah; it is too long to cite, and would be impaired by abridgment. See his *Commentaire*, vol. iv. pp. vi. viii.

See pp. 112, 113, of this volume.

will enable the reader to enter more fully into their force and meaning.

1. *Investigate the argument of each psalm.* This is sometimes intimated in the prefixed title: but as these inscriptions are not always genuine, it will be preferable, in every case, to deduce the argument from a diligent and attentive reading of the psalm itself, and then to form our opinion concerning the correctness of the title, if there be any.

2. *With this view, examine the historical origin of the psalm, or the circumstances that led the sacred poet to compose it.* In addition to the remarks introduced in the former part of this work *, we may observe, that much advantage and assistance may be derived from studying the psalms *chronologically*, and comparing them with the historical books of the Old Testament, particularly those which treat of the Israelites and Jews, from the origin of their monarchy to their return from the Babylonish captivity. Of the benefit that may be obtained from such a comparison of the two books of Samuel, we have already given some striking examples. †

3. *Ascertain the author of the psalm.* This is frequently intimated in the inscriptions; but as these are not always to be depended upon, we must look for other more certain criteria by which to ascertain correctly the real author of any psalm. The *historical circumstances*, which are very frequently as well as clearly indicated, and the *poetical character* impressed on the compositions of each of the inspired poets, will enable us to accomplish this very important object. Let us take, for instance, the psalms of David. Not only does he allude to his own personal circumstances, to the dangers to which he was exposed, the persecutions he endured, the wars in which he was engaged, his heinous sin against God, and the signal blessings conferred upon him; but his psalms are further stamped with a peculiar character, by which, if it be carefully attended to, we may easily distinguish him from every other inspired author of the psalms. Hence we find him repeating the same words and ideas almost perpetually; complaining of his afflictions and troubles: imploring help from God in the most earnest supplications; professing his confidence in God in the strongest manner; rejoicing in the answers graciously vouchsafed to his prayers; and labouring to express his gratitude for all the blessings conferred upon him. Again, in what ardent language does he express his longing desire to behold

* See Vol. I. p. 349.

† See p. 80, of this volume.

the sanctuary of God, and join with the multitude of those who kept holyday! With what animation does he describe the solemn pomp with which the ark was conducted to Jerusalem, &c.! Of all the sacred poets, David is the most pleasing and tender.

The style of David has been imitated by the other psalmists, who have borrowed and incorporated many of his expressions and images in their odes: but these imitations may easily be distinguished from their archetype, by the absence of that elegance and force which always characterizes the productions of an original author.

4. *Attend to the structure of the psalms.* The psalms, being principally designed for the national worship of the Jews, are adapted to choral singing: as we have already adverted to this circumstance*, it may suffice again briefly to intimate it on the present occasion, and to observe, that attention to the choral structure of these compositions will enable us better to enter into their spirit and meaning†. Bishop Horsley's edition of the Psalms is carefully divided with a view to this very circumstance.

X. We shall conclude this section, the importance of whose subject must apologize for its apparently disproportionate length, with the following common but very useful

TABLE OF THE PSALMS,

Classed according to their several subjects, and adapted to the purposes of private devotion.

I. *Prayers.*

1. Prayers for pardon of sin, Psal. vi. xxv. xxxviii. li. cxxx. Psalms styled penitential, vi. xxxii. xxxviii. li. cii. cxxx. cxliii.

2. Prayers, composed when the Psalmist was deprived of an opportunity of the public exercise of religion, Psal. xlii. xliii. lxiii. lxxxiv.

3. Prayers, in which the Psalmist seems extremely dejected, though not totally deprived of consolation, under his afflictions, Psal. xiii. xxii. lxix. lxxvii. lxxxviii. cxliii.

4. Prayers, in which the Psalmist asks help of God, in consideration of his own integrity, and the uprightness of his cause, Psal. vii. xvii. xxvi. xxxv.

5. Prayers, expressing the firmest trust and confidence in God under afflictions, Psal. iii. xvi. xxvii. xxxi. liv. lvi. lvii. lxi. lxii. lxxi. lxxxvi.

* See pp. 102, 103, of this volume.

† Bauer, Herm. Sacr. pp. 392—394.

6. Prayers composed when the people of God were under affliction or persecution, Psal. xlv. lx. lxxiv. lxxix. lxxx. lxxxiii. lxxxix. xciv. cii. cxxiii. cxxxvii.

7. The following are likewise prayers in time of trouble and affliction, Psal. iv. v. xi. xxviii. xli. lv. lix. lxiv. lxx. cix. cxx. cxl. cxli. cxlii.

8. Prayers of intercession, Psal. xx. lxvii. cxxii. cxxxii. cxliv.

II. *Psalms of thanksgiving.*

1. Thanksgivings for mercies vouchsafed to particular persons, Psal. ix. xviii. xxii. xxx. xxxiv. xl. lxxv. ciii. cviii. cxvi. cxviii. cxxxviii. cxliv.

2. Thanksgivings for mercies vouchsafed to the Israelites in general, Psal. xlv. xlviii. lxv. lxvi. lxviii. lxxvi. lxxx. lxxxv. xcvi. cv. cxxiv. cxxvi. cxxix. cxxxv. cxxxvi. cxlix.

III. *Psalms of praise and adoration, displaying the attributes of God.*

1. General acknowledgments of God's goodness and mercy, and particularly his care and protection of good men, Psal. xxiii. xxxiv. xxxvi. xci. c. ciii. cvii. cxvii. cxxi. cxlv. cxli.

2. Psalms displaying the power, majesty, glory, and other attributes of the Divine Being, Psal. viii. xix. xxiv. xxix. xxxiii. xlvii. l. lxv. lxvi. lxxvi. lxxvii. xciii. xcv. xcvi. xcvii. xcix. civ. cxi. cxiii. cxiv. cxv. cxxxiv. cxxxix. cxlvii. cxlviii. cl.

IV. *Instructive Psalms.*

1. The different characters of good and bad men: the happiness of the one, and the misery of the other, are represented in the following psalms: i. v. vii. ix. x. xi. xii. xiv. xv. xvii. xxiv. xxv. xxxii. xxxiv. xxxvi. xxxvii. l. lii. liii. lviii. lxxiii. lxxv. lxxxiv. xci. xcii. xciv. cxii. cxix. cxxi. cxxv. cxxvii. cxxviii. cxxxiii.

2. The excellence of God's law. Psal. xix. cxix.

3. The vanity of human life. Psal. xxxix. xlix. xc.

4. Advice to magistrates. Psal. lxxxii. ci.

5. The virtue of humility. Psal. cxxxi.

V. *Psalms more eminently and directly prophetical*, Psal. ii. xvi. xxii. xl. xlv. lxviii. lxxii. lxxxvii. cx. cxviii.

VI. *Historical psalms*, Psal. lxxviii. cv. cvi.

SECTION III.

ON THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

I. *Title, author, and canonical authority* ; — II. *Scope* ; — III. *Synopsis of contents* ; — IV. *Observations*.

I. **THE** book of Proverbs* has always been ascribed to Solomon, whose name it bears, though, from the frequent repetition of the same sentences, as well as from some variations in style which have been discovered, doubts have been entertained whether he really was the author of every maxim it comprizes. Those in the thirtieth chapter are expressly called the words of Agur the son of Jakeh; and the thirty-first chapter is entitled the “words of king Lemuel.” It seems certain that the collection called the “Proverbs of Solomon” was arranged in the order in which we now have it, by different hands: but it is not therefore to be concluded that they are not the productions of Solomon, who, we are informed, composed no less than three thousand proverbs (1 Kings iv. 32). As it is nowhere said that Solomon himself made a collection of proverbs and sentences, the general opinion is, that several persons made a collection of them; Hezekiah, among others, as mentioned in the twenty-fifth chapter; Agur, Isaiah, and Ezra might have done the same. The Jewish writers affirm that Solomon wrote the Canticles, or song bearing his name, in his youth, the Proverbs in his riper years, and Ecclesiastes in his old age.

Michaelis has observed, that the book of Proverbs is frequently cited by the apostles, who considered it as a treasure of revealed morality, whence Christians were to derive their rules of conduct; and the canonical authority of no book of the Old Testament is so well ratified by the evidence of quotations as that of the Proverbs.

II. The **SCOPE** of this book is, to instruct men in the deepest mysteries of true wisdom and understanding, the height and perfection of which is, the true knowledge of the divine will, and the sincere fear of the Lord (Prov. i. 2—7. ix. 10). To this end, the book is filled with the choicest sententious aphorisms, infinitely surpassing all the ethical sayings of the antient sages, and comprizing in themselves distinct doctrines, duties, &c. of piety towards God, of equity and benevolence towards

* On the peculiar nature of the Hebrew Proverbs, see Vol. I. pp. 422—425, *supra*.

man, and of sobriety and temperance ; together with precepts for the right education of children, and for the relative situations of subjects, magistrates, and sovereigns.

III. The book of Proverbs may be divided into five parts.

PART 1. In the proem or exordium, containing the first *nine* chapters, the teacher gives his pupil a series of admonitions, directions, cautions, and excitements to the study of wisdom. This part, says Bishop Lowth, is varied, elegant, sublime, and truly poetical : the order of the subject is, in general, excellently preserved, and the parts are very aptly connected. It is embellished with many beautiful descriptions and personifications ; the diction is polished, and abounds with all the ornaments of poetry, so that it scarcely yields in elegance and splendour to any of the sacred writings.

PART 2. extends from chapter x. to xxii. 16, and consists of what may be strictly and properly called *proverbs*—namely, unconnected sentences, expressed with much neatness and simplicity.

PART 3. reaches from chapter xxii. 17, to xxv. inclusive : in this part the tutor drops the sententious style, and addresses his pupil as present, to whom he gives renewed and connected admonitions to the study of wisdom.

The proverbs contained in

PART 4. are supposed to have been selected from some larger collection of Solomon “by the men of Hezekiah”—that is, by the prophets whom he employed to restore the service and writings of the Jewish church (2 Chron. xxxi. 20, 21). This part, like the second, consists of detached unconnected sentences, and extends from chapter xxv. to xxix. Some of the proverbs, which Solomon had introduced into the former part of the book, are here repeated.

PART 5. comprizes chapters xxx. and xxxi. In the former are included the wise observations and instructions delivered by Agur the son of Jakeh to his pupils Ithiel and Ucal. The thirty-first chapter contains the precepts which were given to Lemuel by his mother, who is supposed by some to have been a Jewish woman married to some neighbouring prince, and who appears to have been most ardently desirous to guard him against vice, to establish him in the principles of justice, and to unite him to a wife of the best qualities. Of Agur we know nothing ; nor have any of the commentators offered so much as a plausible conjecture respecting him.

IV. The proverbs of Solomon afford a noble specimen of the didactic poetry of the Hebrews ; they abound with antithetic parallels ; for this form is peculiarly adapted to adages,

aphorisms, and detached sentences. Much, indeed, of the elegance, acuteness, and force, which are discernible in Solomon's wise sayings, is derived from the antithetic form, the opposition of diction and sentiment. Hence a careful attention to the parallelism of members (which topic has already been largely discussed *) will contribute to remove that obscurity in which some of the proverbs appear to be involved. Sometimes also one member or part of a proverb must be supplied from the other; or, as Glassius has expressed it in other words, sometimes one thing is expressed in one member, and another in the other, and yet both are to be understood in both members. Thus in Prov. x. 14. we read,

Wise men lay up knowledge;
But the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.

The meaning of which is, that wise men communicate, for the benefit of others, the wisdom they have acquired and preserved; while fools, being destitute of that knowledge, soon exhaust their scanty stock, and utter not merely useless but even injurious things. Again,

A wise son maketh a glad father:
But a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother. Prov. x. 1.

Both the father and mother are to be understood in the two members of this passage, although in the first the father only is noticed, and in the second the mother only is mentioned. Lastly, many things, which are spoken generally, are to be restrained to particular individuals and circumstances: as, however, this rule has already been illustrated at length, it will not be necessary to multiply additional examples. †

* See Vol. I. pp. 318—323, *supra*.

† See Vol. I. p. 641, *et seq.*

SECTION IV.

ON THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

I. *Title, author, and canonical authority*; — II. *Scope and synopsis*; — III. *Observations*.

I. THE title of this book in our Bibles is derived from the Septuagint version, *Εκκλησιαστής* signifying a *preacher*, or one who harangues a public congregation. In Hebrew it is

termed, from the initial words, *Dibre Coheleth*, “the Words of the Preacher;” by whom may be intended, either the person assembling the people, or he who addresses them when convened. Although this book does not bear the name of Solomon, it is evident from several passages that he was the author of it. Compare ch. i. 12. 16. ii. 4—9. and xii. 9, 10. The celebrated Rabbi Kimchi, however, ascribes it to the prophet Isaiah; and the Talmudical writers to Hezekiah. Grotius, from some foreign expressions which he thinks are discoverable in it, conceives that it was composed by order of Zerubabel for his son Abihud; Jahn, after some later German critics, for the same reason, thinks it was written after the Babylonish captivity; and Zirkel imagines that it was composed about the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, from some traces of the notions of the Pharisees and Sadducees which he conceives he has discovered in this book, and against which he supposes it to be directed. But it is not likely that those Jewish sects would permit a work levelled against themselves to be inserted in the sacred canon: and with regard to the foreign expressions alleged by Grotius, their appearance may be accounted for by the circumstance of Solomon’s having indulged in sinful intercourse “with strange women,” (1 Kings xi. 1, 2) whose language he probably acquired.

The beautiful descriptions, which this book contains, of the phenomena in the natural world, and their causes, of the circulation of the blood (as the late Bishop Horsley thought) and the economy of the human frame, all show it to be the work of a philosopher. It is generally supposed to have been written by Solomon in his old age, after he had repented of his sinful practices, and when, having seen and observed much, as well as having enjoyed every thing that he could wish, he was fully convinced of the vanity of every thing except piety towards God. The Rabbinical writers inform us, and their account is corroborated by Saint Jerome, that the Jews, who, after the captivity, collected the inspired writings into the canon, at first refused to admit this book into the sacred code, in consequence of some contradictions, which, from inattention to the author’s scope and design, they imagined to exist in it. But, after considering the expressions it contains towards the close, relative to the fear of God and the observation of his laws, they concluded to receive it; and its canonical authority has been recognized ever since. “There can, indeed, be no doubt of its title to admission: Solomon was eminently

distinguished by the illumination of the divine Spirit, and had even twice witnessed the divine presence (1 Kings iii. 5. ix. 2. xi. 9). The tendency of the book is excellent when rightly understood; and Solomon speaks in it with great clearness of the revealed truths of a future life and of a future judgment." *

Bishop Lowth has classed this book among the didactic poetry of the Hebrews: but Mr. Des Voeux † considers it as a philosophical discourse written in a rhetorical style, and interspersed with verses, which are introduced as occasion served; whence it obtained a place among the poetical books. To this opinion Bishop Lowth subsequently declared his assent.

II. The scope of this book is explicitly announced in ch. i. 2. and xiii. 13, viz. to demonstrate the vanity of all earthly objects, and to draw off men from the pursuit of them, as an *apparent* good, to the fear of God, and communion with him, as to the highest and only *permanent* good in this life, and to show that men must seek for happiness beyond the grave. We may therefore consider it as a philosophical inquiry into that most important and disputed question—What is the *summum bonum*, or chief good of man? “What is *best* for the sons of men to do under the heaven, *all the days of their life*?” (ii. 3).

In the prosecution of his inquiry, Solomon “states the various opinions that had been held on the subject, and the result of his own dear-bought experience, in search of the respective enjoyments of human wisdom and human folly; classing, under the former, the pursuit of several sorts of knowledge and science; and under the latter, pleasures of the sensual kind, mirth, wine, eating and drinking, women, &c. grandeur, magnificent works, splendid palaces, great treasures, and “whatsoever his eyes desired;” but he pronounces them all to be “vanity and vexation of spirit;” or disappointment and grief: for that “in much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow,” from the greater insight he acquires into the follies and vices of mankind, and his own inability to correct or reform them (i. 18); that “of making many books there is no end, and that much study is weariness of the flesh;” from the endless variety and discordance of the opinions of philosophers respecting the chief good (xii. 12). That sensual gratifications are madness and folly, and the cares of this world, its goods and its labours, which

* Dr. Gray's Key, p. 292.

† In his “Philosophical and Critical Essay on the Book of Ecclesiastes,” 4to, 1762.

no man knoweth “whether he shall leave it to a wise man or a fool,” are precarious and deceitful, and incapable of satisfying the rational desires of man. And the result of all his researches—“vanity of vanities, all is vanity,”—has been, and ever will be, the course of the world *, for there is “nothing new under the sun.” This is the substance of the two first chapters, and of the subsequent illustrations.

Solomon, however, was by no means a gloomy moralist, neither a morose cynic, nor a snarling philosopher, who, from the abuse of this world’s goods, decried their moderate and seasonable use (iii. 1—8), nor a Manichean atheist, who held the predominance of an evil principle (Isa. xlv. 7. Amos iii. 6). On the contrary, he recommends a moderate enjoyment of the good things of this life, considering them as the gift of God;—that “to enjoy is to obey.”

“God hath made every thing beautiful in its time, [or proper season]——I know that there is no good in them [the things themselves], but for a man to rejoice [in them], and to do good in his life; and that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good in all his labour: it is the gift of God,” (iii. 11, 12).

And to prevent this abuse, God has implanted in the heart of man a presentiment of a future state of retribution; founded on the otherwise unaccountable dispensations of his providence in this life, in which injustice, oppression, and vice are not uniformly punished, nor virtue rewarded; leading the wise to the rational conclusion, that God will judge the righteous and the wicked, if not here, most probably hereafter; and the fool, to the opposite senseless and grovelling conclusion, that men are no better than brutes; that all go to the same place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again; upon which hypothesis there is nothing better than that a man should enjoy his own works, for that his lot is only in this world; for who shall demonstrate to him a future state of retribution?—which he thus expresses:

“God hath also set futurity in their heart; inasmuch as man cannot find out [or account for] the work that God doeth from the beginning to the end [of the world, otherwise].——I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for futurity [to

* The finest commentary on this aphorism, *Vanity of vanities,—all is vanity*, was unintentionally furnished by the late celebrated Earl of Chesterfield, in one of his posthumous letters. See the passage at length in Bishop Horne’s Works, vol. v. discourse xiii. pp. 185—187, where the frightful picture exhibited by a dying man of the world is admirably improved to the edification of the reader.

decide; when] there will be nothing to add, nor to diminish from it. And God doeth it that [men] should fear before his presence, [for HE that is HIGHER than the highest, regardeth, v. 8]. What hath been, is now, and what shall be, is now; but God will require the past. Moreover I saw, under the sun, the place of judgment, that impiety was there, and the place of justice, that iniquity was there: and I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there [in the future state] for every purpose and for every work [to be judged],” (iii. 11—17. Compare ix. 1—3. viii. 14).

“I said in my heart, according to the [foolish] discourse of the sons of Adam:—God created them, to show them that they were like beasts: for the event to the sons of Adam, and the event to the beasts, the same event is to them [both;] as the one dieth, so the other dieth; the same spirit is to all: so that there is no pre-eminence of the man above the beast; for all are vanity. All go unto one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth that the spirit of the sons of Adam goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast downward to the earth? Wherefore, [concludes this foolish reasoner] I perceive that there is nothing better, than that man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his lot: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?” (iii. 18—22. Compare viii. 15. ix. 4—6).

The former conclusion (of a future judgment) he thus supports:

“Because sentence is not speedily executed against an evil work, therefore the heart of the sons of Adam is fully bent to do evil: but although the sinner may do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged; yet surely I know, that it shall be well to them that fear God, who are afraid of his presence; but it shall not be well to the wicked, nor shall he prolong his days as a shadow, [which lengthens as the sun declines], because he is not afraid of the presence of God,” (viii. 11—13).

The latter conclusion he thus refutes, in the following ironical concession to the youthful libertine:

“Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy puberty, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes!—But know thou, that for all these, God will bring thee into judgment,” (xi. 9).

And he recommends early piety; to consecrate the prime of life to God, rather than the dregs of old age, of whose infirmities and privations he gives a lively enigmatical description;

concluding with the different destinations of the spirit of man and of beasts.

“Remember THY CREATOR, even in the days of thy youth; before the evil days [of age] come, and the years approach, in which thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;—[before] the man shall go to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets [at his funeral].——

“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was [originally]; but the spirit shall return to THE GOD who gave it,” (xii. 1—7).

These probable deductions of reason in favour of a future state, Solomon crowns with asserting its certainty, from the dictates of revelation; contrasting the firm, impressive, and uniformly consistent information of the inspired writers, with the vague, uncertain, and unsatisfactory arguments of mere philosophers.

“The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened: the master-collections were given by ONE SHEPHERD. And further, my son, from these, be admonished, that of making many books there is no end, and much study [or reading] is weariness of the flesh.”

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole of man [his chief good]. For God will bring every work into judgment, together with every secret; whether it be good, or whether it be evil,” (xii. 11—14). *

Mr. Des Voeux, however, who does not exclude the view of the scope above given as primarily announced by Solomon, is of opinion that the royal author's design is to prove the immortality of the soul, or rather the necessity of another state after this life, by such arguments as may be deduced from reason and experience. In prosecuting this subject, Solomon occasionally inserts some observations, which do not directly belong to the main design of the treatise, but must be regarded either as consequences naturally arising from the same principles which it was his business to establish in order to come to the main conclusion, or as considerations, without which his principles must have lain open to objections from the libertines or pretended free-thinkers of his age. Much of the obscurity which is generally admitted to exist in the book of Ecclesiastes, arises from not attending to the train of argument proposed by Solomon, which difficulty the ordinary division of chapters

* Dr. Hales's Analysis, vol. ii. book i. pp. 401—405.

and verses may perhaps contribute to increase. Mr. Des Voeux reduces the whole discourse to three propositions, every one of which, when properly reflected upon, yields a strong proof of a future state of rewards and punishments: and as his mode of analysing this book gives a juster idea of its important contents than any we have yet seen, we have adopted it in the following synopsis, with a few variations.

- | | | |
|----------|---------|---|
| Ch. i. | 1. | The introduction. |
| | 2, 3. | THE FIRST PROPOSITION:—No labour or trouble of men in this world can ever be so profitable as to produce in them a lasting contentment and thorough satisfaction of mind. |
| | 4—11. | 1st proof. The course of nature. |
| | 12, &c. | 2d proof. Men's occupations. |
| | 16—18. | 1st head. Wisdom or philosophy. |
| Ch. ii. | 1, 2. | 2d head. Pleasure. |
| | 3—10. | Both jointly. |
| | 11. | General conclusion of the second proof. |
| | | A review of the second proof, with special conclusions relating to every particular therein mentioned, viz. |
| | 12—17. | 1. Wisdom. |
| | 18—23. | 2. Riches. |
| | 24—26. | 3. Pleasure. |
| Ch. iii. | 1, &c. | 3d proof. Inconstancy of men's will. |
| | 9. | Conclusion of the third proof. |
| | | A review of the second and third proofs considered conjointly, with special observations and corollaries. |
| | 10, 11. | 1st observation. God is inculpable. |
| | 12—15. | 2d observation. God is the author of whatever befalls us in this world. |
| | 16, 17. | 1st corollary. God shall redress all grievances. |
| | 18—21. | 2d corollary. God must be exalted, and man humbled. |
| | 22. | 3d corollary. God alloweth men to enjoy the present. |
| Ch. iv. | 1. | 4th proof. Men's neglect of proper opportunities evidenced in several instances, viz. |
| | 1—3. | 1. Oppression. |
| | 4. | 2. Envy. |
| | 5, 6. | 3. Idleness. |
| | 7—12. | 4. Avarice. |

Ch. v. 13—19.

5. Misapplication of esteem and regard.

N. B. V. 1—9. is a digression, containing several admonitions, in order to prevent any misconstruction of the foregoing remarks.

10—12.

6. Expensive living.

13.

THE SECOND PROPOSITION:—Earthly goods, and whatever we can acquire by our utmost trouble and labour in this world, are so far from making us lastingly happy, that they may even be regarded as real obstacles to our ease, quiet, and tranquillity.

14—17.

1st proof. Instability of riches.

Ch. vi.

18—2.

2d proof. Insufficiency of riches to make one happy.

3—6.

Corollary. The fate of an abortive is preferable, upon the whole, to that of one who lives without enjoying life.

7—9.

3d proof. Men's insatiableness.

10, 11.

General conclusion from the first and second proposition.

12.

THE THIRD PROPOSITION:—Men know not what is or is not truly advantageous to them; because they are either ignorant or unmindful of that which must come to pass after they are dead.

Ch. vii.

1—8.

1st proof. Wrong estimation of things.

A digression intended (like that in v. 1—9) to prevent any misconstruction of the foregoing observations, and containing several advices, together with a strong commendation of him who gives them, in order to enforce the observation of the rules laid down by him.

9—12.

1st advice. Not to blame Providence.

13.

2d advice. Not to judge of Providence.

14, 15.

3d advice. To submit to Providence.

16—20.

4th advice. To avoid excess.

21, 22.

5th advice. Not to mind idle reports.

23—25.

Commendation of the foregoing advices, from the author's application to examine every thing, and especially

26—29.

1. Wickedness and ignorance.

Ch. viii.

1—8.

2. Wisdom.

2d proof. Anticipated judgments.

- Ch. viii. 9—14. 1. That sin shall go unpunished, because it is so in this world.
- Ch. ix. 15—6. 2. That life is preferable to death.
- 7—9. 1st corollary. Earthly enjoyments are not criminal.
10. 2d corollary. A proper use must be made of our faculties.
- 11—15. 3d proof. Judgments that are seemingly right, yet truly false.
- 16, &c. 4th proof. Little regard paid to wisdom.
16. 1. Past services are forgotten.
- Ch. x. 17—4. 2. The least fault is taken notice of.
- 5—19. 3. Favour gets what is due to merit.
20. A caution, to prevent the abuse of the foregoing remarks.

PRACTICAL INFERENCES.

- Ch. xi. 1—4. 1. From the first proposition. We must give unto earthly goods that stability which they are capable of.
- 5, 6. 2. From the first and second proposition. We must, in our conduct, conform to the design of Providence concerning us, and leave the success to God.
- Ch. xi. 7—10. 3 From the three propositions; but especially from the third. We must seek for happiness beyond the grave.
- xii. 1—8..
- 9—12. Commendation of the work, from several considerations.
- 13, 14. THE CONCLUSION of the whole :—That there must be a state of true and solid happiness for men in a future state.—In other words, the fear of God, and keeping his commandments, is the whole of man, that is, his chief good, his whole interest, privilege, honour, and happiness, as well as duty: for, after this vain life is past, another scene will succeed, and men shall be judged and recompensed according to their conduct, secret as well as open, and whether it may have been good or evil.

III. Bishop Lowth pronounces the style of this book to be singular; its language is generally low, frequently loose and unconnected, approaching to the incorrectness of conversation: and it possesses very little poetical character, even in the com-

position and structure of the periods: which peculiarity, he thinks, may be accounted for from the nature of the subject. Leusden says, that in his time (the close of the seventeenth century) the book of Ecclesiastes was read in the Jewish synagogues on the feast of tabernacles; because, as that feast commemorates the gladness and content with which their forefathers dwelt in tents, so this book, while it shows the vanity of all earthly things, inculcates on every one the duty of rejoicing and being content with such things as God in his providence thinks fit to bestow.

SECTION V.

ON THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

I. *Author*; — II. *Canonical Authority*; — III. *Structure of the Poem* — *its Subject and Scope* — *the Song of Solomon a sublime mystical Allegory.*

FEW poems have excited more attention, or have found more translators and commentators, than the *Song of Songs*: but the learned are not yet agreed respecting its arrangement and design. The majority consider it as an inspired book, and certainly on the best evidence, while others affirm it to be merely a human composition; the former regard it as a sacred allegory; the latter, as a mere amatory effusion.

I. In addition to other divine compositions of Solomon, we are informed (1 Kings iv. 32) that “his songs were a thousand and five,” of which the present book is supposed to be one. In the first verse it is called, by way of eminence and distinction, according to the Hebrew idiom a *Song of Songs*, or a *Song of Loves*. Of this antient poem the author is asserted, by the unanimous voice of antiquity, to have been Solomon; and this tradition is corroborated by many internal marks of authenticity. In the very first verse it is ascribed to the Hebrew monarch by name: he is the subject of the piece, and the principal actor in the conduct of it. Allusions are made to the rich furniture of his palace (i. 5); to the horses and chariots which he purchased of Pharaoh king of Egypt (i. 9. compared with 1 Kings x. 28, 29); to Aminadab, who was eminent for such chariots, and who married one of Solomon’s daughters (vi. 12. with 1 Kings iv. 11); to his

building of the temple under the figure of a palanquin or coach for his bride (iii. 9, 10); to the materials of which it was formed. In short, all the leading circumstances in Solomon's life, in a religious point of view, appear to be either alluded to or implied in this antient poem, and therefore render it probable that it was the production of some writer in his age, if it were not his own composition. From the occurrence, however, of a few Aramean words, some later critics have imagined that this book was written in the latter years of the Jewish monarchy, not long before the captivity; but this conjecture is repelled by the internal evidences above cited in favour of Solomon; and the occasional appearance of Aramean words will be satisfactorily accounted for when we recollect the extensive commercial intercourse that existed between Solomon and the neighbouring nations. Dr. Kennicott was of opinion that this poem is many ages later than Solomon, from the uniform insertion of the *yod* in all copies, in spelling the name of David; but this remark is not conclusive, for the name of David occurs but once (iv. 4): and, after it had been written erroneously by a scribe in the time of Ezra, it might have been inadvertently copied by subsequent transcribers. *

II. If the canon of the Hebrew Scriptures was settled by Ezra (which we have already seen was most probably the case †), there can be no doubt but that the Song of Solomon is a sacred book; for, to use the strong language of Bishop Warburton, "Ezra wrote, and we may believe acted, 'by the inspiration of the Most High,' amid the last blaze indeed, yet in the full lustre of expiring prophecy. And such a man would not have placed any book that was not sacred in the same

* Dr. Kennicott, Diss. i. pp. 20—22. Hewlett's Commentary on the Song of Solomon, Supplementary Observations, *in fine*. An eminent Hebraist of the present day (Mr. Bellamy) has stated his opinion to be, that it was a book of great antiquity in the time of the Hebrew king, and is the same which is referred to in the Psalms by the words "*dark sayings of old*." He thinks it possible that Solomon collected and incorporated the materials of this book, as David did other sacred songs of prophecy and praise, which were in use in the church before his time; but affirms that the idea of Solomon being the author of this Song of Songs is founded on a mis-translation of the Hebrew word *Lishlomoh*, which occurs in the first verse. As Mr. B. refers to a work not yet published in support of his hypothesis, it is impossible to form a correct judgment respecting it; but we may be permitted to observe, that the internal evidences above noticed, which make so strongly against Dr. Kennicott, afford pretty strong corroboration of the universally received version, as well as of the uniform belief of the Jews, who surely were acquainted with their native tongue. See the Classical Journal, vol. xv. No. 30, p. 190.

† See pp. 5, 6. *supra*.

volume with the law and the prophets *.” In addition to this evidence, the following considerations will authorize us to infer, that the Song of Solomon was, from the most early period, deemed a sacred book, and ranked with the Hagiographa or Holy Writings of the Jews, and thence was received among the canonical books of the Old Testament.

A Greek translation of it is extant, which without contradiction is ascribed to the Jewish authors of the Septuagint, who flourished about two centuries before Christ, and which still forms a part of the Alexandrian version. With the same conviction of the sacred character of the work, it was rendered into Greek, in the second century of the Christian æra, by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. Origen, who wrote early in the third century, on the authority of those learned Jews who were contemporary with him, and whom he was in the habit of consulting respecting the authority and literal import of their sacred books, inserted it in his Hexapla, and wrote some homilies upon it, explaining its mystical sense, which have in part been translated into Latin by Jerome. Further, that the antient Jews, without exception, considered it as a divinely inspired production, appears from the allegorical signification annexed to it in the Chaldee paraphrase. Josephus, in his answer to Apion, gives a catalogue of the Jewish books, and in the third class of such as related to moral instruction includes the Song of Songs †. From the Jewish synagogue this book was received into the Christian church without any doubt of its divine authority: it occurs in the catalogue of books of the Old Testament made by Melito Bishop of Sardis in Lydia, who is placed by Cave about the year 170, who travelled into Palestine on purpose to learn the number of these books, and who made the first catalogue of the Hebrew Scriptures ‡. It is cited by Ignatius, who had been a disciple of the apostle Saint John about the beginning of the second century, as a book of authority in the church at Antioch. It is enumerated in the list of canonical books occurring in the synopsis attributed to Athanasius, who flourished in the third century, and in the catalogues of Jerome and Rufinus, towards the close of the fourth century, in which

* Bishop Gleig's edition of Stackhouse, vol. i. p. xxiii.

† Josephus cont. Apion, book i. c. 8. Eusebius, following the Jewish historian, makes the Song of Songs the fifteenth of the number of canonical books. Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. c. 25.

‡ Eusebius has preserved this catalogue of Melito's in his Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. c. 26.

also we find it cited in the Apostolical Constitutions, and also in the Apostolical Canons*; since which time, the Song of Songs has maintained its place in the sacred canon. †

But, though the Song of Songs has come down to us thus strongly recommended by the voice of antiquity, its divine authority has been questioned in modern days. Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia, a bold critic, and a determined foe to allegorical interpretations, in the fourth and fifth centuries, is said to have spoken in disrespectful terms of this poem, as well as of the book of Job: but, as those accounts appear among the charges and accusations of his enemies, Dr. Lardner, with great propriety, doubts the accuracy of such representation ‡. In the early part of the last century, Simon and Le Clerc questioned its authenticity, but were refuted by the elder Carpzov; and subsequently the eccentric writer Whiston boldly affirmed it to be a dissolute love-song, composed by Solomon when advanced in years and dissolute in practice, and that consequently it ought to be excluded from the canon of the sacred books. This preposterous notion (for nothing like proof has been offered in its support) has, with some slight modification, been adopted by several later writers; and Semler, among others, declines taking any notice of it, as a work manifestly spurious §. These objections, however, are sufficiently counteracted by the strong internal evidences of the authenticity of the Canticles, as well as by the uninterrupted current of Jewish and Christian antiquity.

III. That this book is a poem, all critics and expositors are agreed; though they are by no means unanimous to what class of Hebrew poetry it is to be referred. Michaelis, to whose profound researches biblical students are so deeply indebted, is of opinion that the object of this poem was simply to inculcate the divine approbation of marriage; and Mendelsohn, a learned German Jew, considers it as a representation, by Solo-

* Constit. Apostol. lib. vi. c. 13. 18. tom. i. pp. 345. 351. Edit. Amst. 1724. Canon. Apostol. No. lxxvi. Ibid. p. 453. Both these productions, though pretending to be of apostolical origin, are spurious compilations of the fourth century. See Dr. Lardner's works, vol. iv. pp. 320—354.

† The various catalogues of the early Christian fathers above referred to are given by the accurate Dr. Lardner in his works, namely, *Melito's*, vol. ii. 146. 148; *Origen's*, vol. ii. 465—484; *Jerome's*, vol. v. 15—18; *Rufinus's*, vol. v. 76, 77; *Athanasius's*, vol. iv. 283, 284; the Synopsis ascribed to him, vol. iv. 290, 291. Other catalogues may be seen in the Index to Dr. Lardner's Works, vol. xi. p. 448. Index v., article Catalogues.

‡ Justin's Remarks on Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 157. 2d edit. Dr. Lardner's Works, vol. iv. pp. 509, 510.

§ Apparatus ad liberalem Vet. Test. Interpretationem, pp. 209—214.

mon's son, of a trial of skill between a shepherd and shepherdess; but the ideas of Mr. Harmer* appear much more rational, who, though unwilling to give it the name of an epithalamium or nuptial dialogue, considers it to be a nuptial song, which will best be explained by compositions of a similar nature in Eastern countries. Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, is of opinion that this song is a regular drama, which is to be explained by the consideration that the Jews were wont to celebrate their nuptials for seven days together, distinguished by peculiar solemnities. He accordingly divides it in the following manner:—

DAY	1	-	-	-	CHAP.	i—ii.	6.
	2	-	-	-	-	ii.	7—17.
	3	-	-	-	-	iii—v.	1.
	4	-	-	-	-	v.	2.—vi. 9.
	5	-	-	-	-	vi.	10.—vii. 11.
	6	-	-	-	-	vii.	12.—viii. 3.
	7	-	-	-	-	viii.	4—14.

Calmet†, the late Bishop Percy‡, and Mr. Williams§ agree with Bossuet. Bishop Lowth, indeed, who has devoted two of his learned and elegant lectures to an examination of this poem, adopts the opinion of Bossuet, not as absolute demonstration, but as a very ingenious and probable conjecture upon an extremely obscure subject. He therefore determines it to be a *sacred pastoral drama*, though deficient in some of the essential requisites of a *regular* dramatic composition ||.

* Outlines of a Commentary on Solomon's Song, 8vo, 1768, re-printed in 1775.

† Calmet, Commentaire Littéral, tom. v. pp. 68, 69.

‡ In his "Song of Solomon, newly translated from the original Hebrew, with a commentary and annotations." 12mo, 1764.

§ In "the Song of Songs, which is by Solomon: a new translation, with a commentary and notes." 8vo, 1801.

|| There is, however, one circumstance in which Bishop Lowth thinks the Song of Songs bears a very striking affinity to the Greek drama: the chorus of virgins seems in every respect congenial to the tragic chorus of the Greeks. They are constantly present, and prepared to fulfil all the duties of advice and consolation: they converse frequently with the principal characters; they are questioned by them, and they return answers to their inquiries; they take part in the whole business of the poem, and it does not appear that they quit the scene upon any occasion. Some of the learned have conjectured, that Theocritus, who was contemporary with the seventy Greek translators of the Scriptures, and lived with them in the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus, was not unacquainted with the beauties of this poem, and that he has almost literally introduced some passages from it into his elegant Idylliums. (Compare Cant. i. 9. vi. 10. with Theoc. xviii. 30. 26; Cant. iv. 11. with Theoc. xx. 26; Cant. viii. 6, 7. with Theoc. xxiii. 23—26). It might also be suspected, that the Greek tragedians were indebted for their chorus to this poem of Solomon, were not the probabilities on the other side much greater, that the Greeks were made acquainted with it at too late a period; and were it

And this, upon the whole, appears to be the most intelligible view of this very difficult poem.

Bauer *, however, affirms this poem to be an idyl; the same opinion is intimated by Jahn, who makes it consist of eight idyls †: but neither of these eminent critics assign any reasons for their opinion. Probably they derived it from Sir William Jones, who, having compared this poem with some of the *cassides* or idyls of the Arabian poets, concludes with expressing his judgment that this song ought to be classed among the Hebrew idyls. ‡

Supported by the high authority of this distinguished scholar, Mr. J. M. Good § considers the Song of Songs as forming, not one continued and individual poem, but a series of poems, each distinct and independent of the other. These he designates "*sacred idyls*," and makes them to be *twelve* in number, viz.

IDYL 1	-	-	-	-	CHAP. i. 1—8.
2	-	-	-	-	i. 9.—ii. 7.
3	-	-	-	-	ii. 8—17.
4	-	-	-	-	iii. 1—5.
5	-	-	-	-	iii. 6.—iv. 7.
6	-	-	-	-	iv. 8.—v. 1.
7	-	-	-	-	v. 2.—vi. 10.
8	-	-	-	-	vi. 11—13.
9	-	-	-	-	vii. 1—9.
10	-	-	-	-	vii. 10.—viii. 4.
11	-	-	-	-	viii. 5—7.
12	-	-	-	-	viii. 8—14.

not evident, that the chorus of the Greeks had a very different origin, were it not evident indeed that the chorus was not added to the fable, but the fable to the chorus. Prælect. xxx. *in fine*.

* Herm. Sacr. p. 386.

† Introd. ad libros sacros Veteris Fœderis, p. 506—508. Jahn divides the poem in the following manner:—

SONG I	-	-	-	CHAP. i. 1.—ii. 7.
2	-	-	-	ii. 8.—iii. 5.
3	-	-	-	iii. 6.—v. 1.
4	-	-	-	v. 2.—vi. 9.
5	-	-	-	vi. 10.—viii. 3.
6	-	-	-	viii. 4—7.
7	-	-	-	viii. 8—12.
8	-	-	-	viii. 13, 14.

‡ Poësos Asiaticæ Commentarii, cap. iii. (Works, vol. iv. or vi. p. 71. 8vo edit.)

§ In his "Song of Songs or Sacred Idyls, translated from the Hebrew, with notes." 8vo, 1803.

In support of this mode of arrangement, Mr. Good remarks that the Song of Solomon cannot be one connected poem, since the transitions are too abrupt for the wildest flights of the Oriental muse, and evidently imply a variety of openings and conclusions; while, as a regular drama, it is deficient in almost every requisite that could give it such a classification; having neither dramatic fable nor action, involution nor catastrophe, and being without beginning, middle, or end*. But in opposition to these strictures it may be observed, that bold transitions are so much the character of Eastern poetry, that this circumstance alone cannot decide against the individuality of the poem.

Further, the subject of the poem *is the same from beginning to end*; the personages introduced as speakers are the same; and, though to a modern reader the transitions in many places may seem abrupt, and the thoughts unconnected, yet the conduct of the piece is not suspended, but is carried on under a fable regularly constructed, and terminating in a conclusion interesting and unexpected.

Although we cannot agree with this elegant scholar and critic respecting the form which he has assigned to the Song of Songs, yet we apprehend he has succeeded with singular felicity in ascertaining the fair bride in whose honour this exquisite poem was primarily composed. Bossuet, Calmet, Harmer, Bishops Percy and Lowth—in short, we believe all modern commentators, have supposed the object of Solomon's attachment to be the royal daughter of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Mr. Good however contends, and we think successfully, that she was a native of Palestine, and espoused some years later: it is not easy to believe that so impassioned a composition as the Song of Songs should have resulted from a *state-alliance*. "The matrimonial connexion of the Hebrew monarch with the Egyptian princess," Mr. Good observes, "was probably, indeed, a connexion of political interest alone; for we have no reason to conceive that it had been preceded by any personal intimacy or interchange of affection: the offer was proposed by him on his first accession to the throne, prior to his having received from Jehovah the gift of superior wisdom; at a time when, according to Archbishop Usher †, he could not have been more than twenty years of age, when he was surrounded by a vast body of opponents and competitors, and when an alliance with the

* Good's Sacred Idyls. Preface, p. iii.

† An. Mund. 2971—2991.

royal family of Egypt was likely to be of essential advantage to him: from which also, as a further proof of his political views in such an union, he received the city of Gezer as a dowry with the princess (1 Kings ix. 16.)—a city captured by Pharaoh from the Canaanites, and rased to the ground, probably from the obstinacy of its resistance; but afterwards rebuilt by Solomon, and converted into a place of considerable distinction.

“The matrimonial connexion here celebrated, on the contrary, appears to have proceeded from reciprocal affection alone; and from the gentleness, modesty, and delicacy of mind, which are uniformly and perpetually attributed to this beautiful and accomplished fair one, she must have been well worthy of the royal love. Instead of being of Egyptian origin, she herself informs us that she was a native of Sharon (Cant. ii. 1), which was a canton of Palestine. Though not of royal blood, she was of noble birth; for she is addressed by her attendants under the appellation of princess (Cant. vii. 1): and though she could not augment by her dowry the dimensions of the national territory, she possessed for her marriage-portion a noble and fruitful estate in Baal-hammon (Cant. viii. 12), ingeniously supposed by Mr. Harmer to have been situated in the delightful valley of Bocat, in the immediate vicinity of Balbec *, leased out to a variety of tenants, whose number we are not acquainted with, but every one of whom paid her a clear rental of a thousand shekels of silver, amounting to about 120*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.* sterling. From the possession of this property it is natural to conceive that her father was deceased; more especially as the house in which she resided is repeatedly called the house of her mother (Cant. iii. 4. viii. 2), as it was her mother who betrothed her to the enamoured monarch (Cant. viii. 5), and as no notice of any kind is taken of the existence of her father. She appears to have possessed two distinct families, and consequently to have had two marriages; for in idyl i. 21, the royal bride speaks of an offspring considerably older than herself, whom she denominates, not her father’s, but her *mother’s children*, who seem to have taken an undue advantage of her infancy, and to have behaved with great unkindness towards her. For these she no where expresses any degree of affection; but for an *own* brother and sister—the former an infant, and the latter considerably younger than

* Outlines of a New Commentary, pp. 35, 36.

herself—she evinces the tenderest regard of the most affectionate bosom (Cant. viii. 1. 8).

“Of the age of this unrivalled beauty, at the time of her nuptials, we are no where informed. Being in possession of an estate bequeathed her by her father, or some collateral relation, she must, at least, have acquired her majority according to the Hebrew ritual; yet, from the circumstance of her brother's being an unweaned infant, she could not have exceeded the prime of life; and from the exquisite delineations of her person, by her companions as well as by her lover, she must have been in the full flower of youth and beauty. As to the age of king Solomon, we may fairly calculate it, from collateral circumstances, to have been about twenty-five or twenty-six, and, consequently, that the nuptials were celebrated about the year 1010 before the birth of Christ. At the age of twenty he contracted his marriage of political interest with the Egyptian princess; and if he had not at this period complied with the luxurious fashion of his age, and opened his haram for the reception of the most beautiful women who could be found, and would consent to live with him, it is obvious that this establishment commenced very shortly afterwards.” *

Before we proceed to offer any further remarks on the style of this sacred poem, justice requires that we notice another view of it which has lately been given by a learned and ingenious, though anonymous, writer in the *New Cyclopaedia* conducted by the Rev. Dr. Rees. He regards it as a parable, in the form of a drama; in which the bride is considered as representing true religion; the royal lover as the Jewish people; the younger sister as the Gospel dispensation. The gradual expansion of it, from its first dawn in the garden of Eden to its meridian effulgence produced by the death and resurrection of Christ, is supposed to be portrayed in these beautiful words—‘Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, and serene as the starry host?’ (See vi. 2). The epilogue in chap. viii. respecting the younger brother and sister, he further conceives, demonstrates that its views terminate in the temple service: while, at the same time, the allusion at the close to the rise of the Gospel and the conversion of the Gentiles, which took place so many hundred years after Solomon, proves that the author wrote under divine inspiration. The metaphorical

* *Outlines of a New Commentary*, p. xi.

sense, thus capable of being put upon every part of the poem, the anonymous writer apprehends, justifies the high appellation of the Song of Songs which has been given to it; and also accounts for its being regarded, by Jews and Christians, as a sacred composition, and for its reception first into the Jewish and then into the Christian church. *

From this view of the subject, it is impossible to withhold the praise of learning, piety, and ingenuity; but we conceive the Song of Solomon to have a more extended meaning than this author admits; and we cannot accede to his arrangement and exposition of its argument, for the following reasons.

It has been a question in all ages, whether the literal and obvious meaning of the Song of Solomon be the whole that was ever intended by the royal bard; or whether it does not, at the same time, afford the veil of a sublime and mystical allegory delineating the bridal union between Jehovah and his pure and uncorrupted church? Michaelis and most of the modern critics on the continent advocate the former opinion; in which they are followed by some eminent critics in our own country †, but the latter opinion is adopted by most commentators, Jewish and Christian.

Among those who hold it to be allegorical, there is also much disagreement; some conceiving it to be no more than a simple allegory, while Bishop Lowth and others consider it as mystical allegory ‡: and are of opinion that under the figure of a marriage is typified the intimate connexion between God and his church, of which a more concise model was furnished in the forty-fifth psalm. That this view of the subject is correct, we think will appear from the following considerations, principally extracted from Bishop Lowth. §

The narrowness and imbecility of the human mind, he observes, being such as scarcely to comprehend or attain a clear idea of any part of the divine nature by its utmost exertions; God has condescended, in a manner, to contract the infinity of his glory, and to exhibit it to our understandings under such imagery as our feeble optics are capable of contemplating. Thus the Almighty may be said to descend, as it were, in the Holy Scriptures, from the height of his majesty, to appear on earth in a human shape, with human senses and affections, in all respects resembling a mortal—"with human voice and

* Dr. Rees' Cyclopaedia, vol. vi. Article *Canticles*.

† Among others by Mr. Hewlett in his valuable Commentary.

‡ On the nature of this species of allegory, see vol. i. pp. 400, 401, *supra*.

§ Prælect. xxxi.

human form." This kind of allegory is called anthropopathy and occupies a considerable portion of theology, properly so called—that is, as delivered in the Holy Scriptures. The principal part of this imagery is derived from the passions; nor indeed is there any one affection or emotion of the human soul which is not, with all its circumstances, ascribed in direct terms, without any qualification whatever, to the supreme God; not excepting those in which human frailty and imperfection is most evidently displayed, anger and grief, hatred and revenge. That love also, and that of the tenderest kind, should bear a part in this drama, is highly natural and perfectly consistent. Thus, not only the fondness of paternal affection is attributed to God, but also the force, the ardour, and the solicitude of conjugal attachment, with all the concomitant emotions, the anxiety, the tenderness, and the jealousy incidental to this passion.

After all, this figure is not in the least productive of obscurity; the nature of it is better understood than that of most others; and although it is exhibited in a variety of lights, it constantly preserves its native perspicuity. A peculiar people, of the posterity of Abraham, was selected by God from among the nations, and he ratified his choice by a solemn covenant. This covenant was founded upon reciprocal conditions; on the one part, love, protection, and support; on the other, faith, obedience, and worship pure and devout. This is that conjugal union between God and his church; that solemn compact so frequently celebrated by almost all the sacred writers under this image. It is, indeed, a remarkable instance of that species of metaphor which Aristotle calls analogical*; that is, when in a proposition consisting of four ideas, the first bears the same relation to the second as the third does to the fourth, and the corresponding words may occasionally change their places without any injury to the sense. Thus, in this form of expression, God is supposed to bear exactly the same relation to the church as a husband to a wife; God is represented as the spouse of the church, and the church as the betrothed to God. Thus also, when the same figure is maintained with a different mode of expression, and connected with different circumstances, the relation is still the same: thus the piety of the people, their impiety, their idolatry, and rejection, stand in the same relation with respect to the sacred covenant; as chastity, modesty, immodesty, adultery, with respect to the marriage contract. And this notion is so very familiar

* Poet. chap. xxii. and Rhet. iii. 3.

and well understood in Scripture, that the word adultery (or whoredom) is commonly used to denote idolatrous worship, and so appropriated does it appear to this metaphorical purpose, that it very seldom occurs in its proper and literal sense.

Of this mode of speaking, the sacred writers furnish us with abundance of examples. Thus the evangelical prophet, when treating of the reconciliation of the church to Jehovah, and her restoration to the divine favour, among many images of a similar nature introduces the following:

For thy husband is thy Maker;
Jehovah, God of Hosts, is his name:
And thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel;
The God of the whole earth shall he be called. Isa. liv. 5, 6.

And in another passage in the form of a comparison:

For as a young man weddeth a virgin,
So shall thy Restorer wed thee;
And as a bridegroom rejoiceth in his bride,
So shall thy God rejoice in thee. Isa. lxii. 5.

The same image a little diversified, and with greater freedom of expression, as better adapted to the display of indignation, is introduced by Jeremiah (ii. 2. iii. 1, &c.), when he declaims against the defection of the Jews from the worship of the true God. Upon the same principle the former part of the prophecy of Hosea ought also to be explained; and whether that part of the prophecy be taken in the literal and historical sense, or whether it be esteemed altogether allegorical, still the nature and principles of this figure, which seems consecrated in some measure to this subject, will evidently appear. None of the prophets, however, have applied the image with so much boldness and freedom as Ezekiel, an author of a most fervid imagination, who is little studious of elegance, or cautious of offending. His great freedom in the use of this image is particularly displayed in two parables (xvi. and xvii), in which he describes the ingratitude of the Jews and Israelites to their great Protector, and their defection from the true worship, under imagery assumed from the character of an adulterous wife, and the meretricious loves of two unchaste women. If these parables (which are put into the mouth of God himself with a direct allegorical application, and in which it must be confessed that delicacy does not appear to be particularly studied) be well considered, we are persuaded, that the Song of Solomon (which is in every part chaste and elegant) will not appear unworthy of the divine sense in which it is usually

taken, either in matter or style, or in any degree inferior either in gravity or purity to the other remains of the sacred poets. To these instances we may add the forty-fifth psalm, which is a sacred epithalamium, of the allegorical application of which, to the union between God and the church, no doubt has hitherto been entertained; though many suspect it, and not without good reason, to have been produced upon the same occasion, and with the same relation to a real fact as the Song of Solomon. Neither ought we to omit, that the writers of the New Testament have freely admitted the same image in the same allegorical sense with their predecessors, and have finally consecrated it by their authority.

Thus, John the Baptist beautifully represents Christ as the bridegroom; himself, as his friend or bridesman, and the church as his spouse * (John iii. 28). Our Lord also adopts the title of Bridegroom in Matt. ix. 15; and likewise in the parable of the virgins or bridesmaids attendant upon the marriage (Matt. xxv. 1). "The Lamb's wife" also, the church, is represented as a "bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. xxi. 2—9), who ought to be "without spot" (Eph. v. 27), as the Shulamite is represented to be (Song iv. 7). And surely, if this most beautiful pastoral poem had not been understood in a spiritual sense, it would not have been admitted into the sacred canon by the antient Jewish church †. Nor is this inconsistent with the opinions of the antient Jews, who, as well as Saint Paul and other Christian writers, found the Messiah almost every where in the Scriptures. Indeed, they always believed their economy to be peculiarly under the protection of the Messiah, in some one or other of his characters, as the Great Angel of the covenant, the King of Israel, or the Son of God. In particular, they applied to him the forty-fifth psalm (which, of all Scripture, most resembles the Song of Songs): for the Chaldee paraphrase on the second verse expressly says—"Thy fairness, *O King Messiah!* exceedeth the sons of men." In the same manner they applied the seventy-second, hundred and tenth, and various other psalms, as well as many passages of the prophets.

* "In the prophetic book of the Song of Solomon," says Bishop Horsley, "the union of Christ and his church is described in images taken entirely from the mutual passion and early love of Solomon and his bride. Read the Song of Solomon, you will find the Hebrew king, if you know any thing of his history, produced indeed as the emblem of a greater personage; but you will find *Him* in every page." Sermons, vol. i. p. 73. 2d edit.

† Dr. Hales' Analysis, vol. ii. p. 400.

Bishop Lowth restricts this sublime allegory to the universal church, and conceives that it has no reference whatever to the spiritual state of individuals; than which he conceives nothing can be more inconsistent with the nature and ground-work of the allegory itself, as well as with the general practice of the Hebrew poets. With regard to the Psalms, Bishop Horne (we think) has demonstrated their spiritual application not only to the church generally, but also to believers who compose the individual members of that church; and that the Song of Solomon is to be legitimately and *soberly* interpreted in the same way, it is apprehended, will satisfactorily appear from the following additional observations.

The church is to be considered as composed of individual believers; and, that there is an analogy between the conduct of God towards his church in general, and his conduct towards individuals, is plainly indicated in many parts of the New Testament. Thus, sometimes the sacred writers compare the whole body of believers to a temple, in which they form living stones, being built on the only foundation, Christ Jesus; at other times, they consider individual believers as temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. Eph. ii. 20—22). So also, they sometimes speak of the church as one—the bride the Lamb's wife; and at other times, of distinct churches or individual believers, as severally married to the Lord (Rev. xxi. 9. 2 Cor. xi. 2). In this manner, Saint Paul allegorizes the history of Hagar and her mistress, referring to the two dispensations, while at the same time he makes a practical application of it to the consciences of the Galatians (Gal. iv. 22—31).

Further, we consider the allegory as designed for the purposes of piety and devotion, which cannot be so well answered without such an application. Though this argument may, at first view, appear weak, it will be strengthened when we recollect the doctrine of the New Testament, that, “*whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning;*” and that their grand design is “*to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*” This shows both the propriety and importance of a particular application of scriptural truths to the circumstances and experience of individuals. “*Religion is a personal thing; and that professor is a hypocrite, the feelings of whose heart are not influenced by it, as well as the actions of his life.*” *

* Williams's Translation of the Song of Songs, pp. 113—115.

The fact is, that much of the language of this poem has been misunderstood by expositors, some of whom, not entering into the spirit and meaning of Oriental poesy, have caused particular passages to be considered as coarse and indelicate, which, in the original, are altogether the reverse; while others (as the learned Dr. Gill for instance) have so confounded the literal and allegorical senses as to give neither distinctly nor completely; at the same time, they have applied the figures to such a variety of objects, as to leave the reader still to seek the right, and, by their minute dissection of the allegory, they have not only destroyed its consistency and beauty, but have also exposed the poem to the unmerited ridicule of profane minds*. Much, unquestionably, has been done, by later writers, towards elucidating the language and allusions of the Song of Songs by the aid of Oriental literature and manners: but, after all the labours of learned men, there will perhaps be found many expressions which are very difficult to us, both as to the literal meaning, and the spiritual instruction intended to be conveyed by them; and some descriptions must not be judged by *modern* notions of delicacy. But the grand outlines, *soberly interpreted*, in the obvious meaning of the allegory, so accord with the affections and experience of the sincere Christian, "that he will hardly ever read and meditate upon them, in a spirit of humble devotion, without feeling a conviction that no other poem of the same kind, extant in the world, could, without most manifest violence, be so explained as to describe the state of his heart at different times, and to excite admiring, adoring, grateful love to God our Saviour, as this does."†

With regard to the style, says Bishop Lowth, this poem is of the pastoral kind, since the two principal personages are represented in the character of shepherds. This circumstance is by no means incongruous to the manners of the Hebrews, whose principal occupation consisted in the care of cattle (Gen.

* The chief error of all the translators of this book, Mr. Good observes with great truth, "results from their having given *verbal* renderings of the Hebrew terms and idioms, which ought merely to have been translated *equivalently*; a method, by which any language in the world, when interpreted into another, may not only occasionally convey a meaning altogether different from what the author intended, but convert a term or phrase of perfect purity and delicacy, in its original import, into one altogether indelicate and unchaste. Songs of Songs, p. xxvi. Mr. Good illustrates this remark by some well-chosen examples, which want of room compels us to omit; but the result of its application, we may be permitted to observe, was his very elegant and delicate version, in which though he adheres solely to the literal meaning, yet he decidedly expresses himself (p. xviii.) in favour of the mystical meaning of the poem.

† Scott, Pref. to Sol. Song.

xlvi. 32—34); nor did they consider this employment as beneath the dignity of the highest characters. Least of all, could it be supposed to be inconsistent with the character of Solomon, whose father was raised from the sheep-fold to the throne of Israel. The pastoral life is not only most delightful in itself, but, from the particular circumstances and manners of the Hebrews, is possessed of a kind of dignity. In this poem it is adorned with all the choicest colouring of language, with all the elegance and variety of the most select imagery. “Every part of the Canticles,” says the learned and eloquent Bossuet, “abounds in poetical beauties; the objects, which present themselves on every side, are the choicest plants, the most beautiful flowers, the most delicious fruits, the bloom and vigour of spring, the sweet verdure of the fields, flourishing and well-watered gardens, pleasant streams, and perennial fountains. The other senses are represented as regaled with the most precious odours, natural and artificial; with the sweet singing of birds, and the soft voice of the turtle; with milk and honey, and the choicest of wine. To these enchantments are added all that is beautiful and graceful in the human form, the endearments, the caresses, the delicacy of love; if any object be introduced which seems not to harmonize with this delightful scene, such as the awful prospect of tremendous precipices, the wildness of the mountains, or the haunts of the lions; its effect is only to heighten by the contrast the beauty of the other objects, and to add the charms of variety to those of grace and elegance.” *

* Bossuet, Pref. to the Cant.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE PROPHETS.

SECTION I.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE PROPHETS AND THEIR WRITINGS.

I. *The Prophetical Books, why so called*; — II. *Different kinds of Prophets mentioned in the Scriptures*; — III. *Situation of the Prophets, and their manner of Living*; — IV. *Nature of the Prophetic Inspiration*; — V. *Collection of their Writings, and mode of announcing their Predictions*; — VI. *Observations on the Structure of Prophetic Poesy*; — VII. *Number and Order of the Prophetic Books*.

WE now enter on the fourth or prophetical part of the Old Testament, according to the division which is generally adopted, but which, as we have already seen *, forms the second division, according to the Jewish classification of the sacred volume. This portion of the Scriptures is termed *prophetical*, because it chiefly consists of predictions of future events; though many historical and doctrinal passages are interspersed through the writings of the *Prophets*, as there also are many predictions of future events scattered through those books, which are more strictly historical. The authors of these books are, by way of eminence, termed *Prophets*, that is, divinely inspired persons, who were raised up among the Israelites to be the ministers of God's dispensations. Jehovah, "at sundry times and in divers manners, spake unto the fathers by the prophets: for prophecy came not of old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (Heb. i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 21). In the earliest ages of the world, some individuals were raised up, who sustained this high function. Thus we find the prophetical character expressly ascribed to Enoch and others, *before* the giving of the law; but reckoning from Moses to Malachi (which perhaps is the more correct mode of computation), we find a series of prophets, who flourished in a continued succession during a

* See p. 9, *supra*, of this volume.

period of more than one thousand years; all confirming the authority of their predecessors; co-operating in the same designs; uniting in one spirit to deliver the same doctrines, and to predict the same blessings to mankind; labouring to reduce the people to the observance of their instructions; and denouncing the severest judgments against such as continued disobedient, or treated their divine commission with neglect or contempt.

II. To these messengers of Heaven, frequent reference is made in various parts of the sacred writings. The term PROPHET, indeed, is of general signification. It was applied by the heathens to all persons who were supposed to be conversant with divine things; and, in conformity to this notion, Saint Paul in his Epistle to Titus (i. 12), when citing a passage from a profane poet, calls him a prophet, because the heathens supposed their poets to be inspired. In the historical books of the Old Testament we meet with frequent notice of the *schools of the prophets*; these appear to have been seminaries, where religious truths, or the divine laws, were particularly taught*. The pupils in these schools were not, strictly speaking, all of them prophets; though God bestowed upon *some* of them the spirit of prophecy, or of predicting future events (2 Kings ii. 3). Further, in the Old Testament, the prophets are spoken of, as "*holy men of God*," as "*seers*," and as "*prophets*," in the most exalted sense of the term. The first denomination seems to have been sometimes applied to men of exemplary piety, who assiduously studied the divine law, as communicated by their legislator Moses; who firmly believed

* When these schools of the prophets were first instituted, is no where recorded in the Scriptures; but as the earliest mention of them is in the time of Samuel, it is not probable that they existed anterior to his days. It is not unlikely that the degeneracy of the priesthood first occasioned the institution of these places, for the better education of those who were to succeed in the sacred ministry. According to the places specified in Scripture (1 Sam. x. 5. 10. and xix. 20. 2 Kings ii. 5. iv. 38. and xxii. 14) the schools of the prophets were first erected in the cities of the Levites; which, for the more convenient instruction of the people, were dispersed through the several tribes of Israel. In these places, convenient edifices were built for the abode of the prophets and their disciples, who were thence termed the *sons of the prophets*; and at their head some venerable truly inspired prophet was placed as governor, who is called their father (1 Sam. x. 2. 2 Kings ii. 12). Samuel was one, and perhaps the first, of those *fathers* (1 Sam. xix. 20); Elijah was another (2 Kings ii. 12), who was succeeded by Elisha in this office (2 Kings iv. 38). The sons of the prophets lived together in a society or community (2 Kings vi. 1); they were instructed in the knowledge of the law, and of the principles of their religion, as well as in the sacred art of psalmody, or (as it is termed in 1 Sam. x. 5. and 1 Chron. xxv. 1. 7) prophesying with harps, psalteries, and cymbals. At the conclusion of their lectures and religious exercises, they were accustomed to eat together with their masters. Stillingfleet's *Origines Sacrae*, pp. 92—101, 8th edition.

in the predictions of good and evil that should attend the Israelites according to the tenor of their conduct; who were observant of the character of the times in which they lived; and who might be able to discern the natural and inevitable consequences of particular actions, without the necessity of immediate inspiration. These men of God, however, received peculiar communications upon certain emergencies. They were divinely appointed to execute some important commissions, and to predict events which were not in the ordinary course of things, and far beyond the reach of human penetration. It was this which sometimes gave them the title of seers. The higher class of prophets were those who foretold important events that were to take place at distant periods; which no human sagacity could foresee, and which were most opposite to the natural conceptions or general expectations of mankind: as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the minor prophets.*

III. The prophets, according to Augustine †, were the philosophers, divines, instructors, and guides of the Hebrews in piety and virtue. These holy men were the bulwarks of religion against the impiety of princes, the wickedness of individuals, and every kind of immorality. Their lives, persons, and discourses were alike instructive and prophetic. Raised up by God to be witnesses of his presence, and living monuments of his will, the events that frequently happened to them were predictions of what was about to befall the Hebrew nation. Although the prophets possessed great authority in Israel, and were highly esteemed by pious sovereigns, who undertook no important affairs without consulting them, yet their way of life was exceedingly laborious, and they were very poor, and greatly exposed to persecution and ill-treatment. They generally lived retired, in some country place, and in colleges or communities, where they and their disciples were employed in prayer, in manual labour, and in study. Their labour, however, was not such as required intense application, or was inconsistent with that freedom from secular cares which their office required. Thus, Elisha quitted his plough, when Elijah called him to the prophetic office (1 Kings xix. 19, 20); and Amos (vii. 14) tells us that he “was no prophet, neither a prophet’s son, but a herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit.” The pupils or sons of the prophets, who lived under the direction of Elijah

* Dr. Cogan’s *Theological Disquisitions*, pp. 275, *et seq.* Dr. Gregory Sharpe’s *Second Argument in Defence of Christianity from Prophecy*, pp. 1—20.

† *De Civitate Dei*, lib. xviii. c. 41.

and Elisha, erected their own dwellings, for which they cut down the timber that was requisite (2 Kings vi. 1—4).

The apparel of the prophets was in unison with the simplicity of their private life. Elijah was clothed with skins, and wore a leather girdle round his loins, (2 Kings i. 8). Isaiah wore sackcloth (xx. 2), which was the ordinary habit of the prophets. Zechariah, speaking of the false prophets who imitated externally the true prophets of the Lord, says that they should not wear a *rough garment* (Heb. *a garment of hair*) to deceive (xiii. 4). Their poverty was conspicuous in their whole life. The presents they received were only bread, fruits, and honey; and the first-fruits of the earth were given them, as being persons who possessed nothing themselves (2 Kings iv. 42). The woman of Shunem, who entertained Elisha, put into the prophet's chamber only what was plain and absolutely necessary (2 Kings iv. 10). The same prophet refused the costly presents of Naaman (2 Kings v. 16), and pronounced a severe sentence upon his servant Gehazi, who had clandestinely obtained a part of them (20—27). Their frugality appears throughout their history;—for instance, the wild gourds, which one of the prophets ordered to be prepared for his disciples (2 Kings iv. 38—41). The angel gave Elijah only bread and water for a long journey (1 Kings xix. 6—8); and Obadiah, the pious governor of Ahab's household, gave the same food to the prophets whose lives he saved in a cave (1 Kings xviii. 13).

It does not appear that the prophets were bound by any vow of celibacy; for Samuel had children, and the Scriptures mention the wives of Isaiah (viii. 3) and Hosea (i. 2). But no women or wives seem to have been admitted into the colleges of the prophets, who maintained a very guarded intercourse with the female sex, as is evident in the conduct of Elisha towards his benevolent hostess (2 Kings iv. 27).

But, however they might be respected by pious monarchs, the prophets were frequently exposed to cruel treatment from wicked princes, whose impiety they reprehended, and to insults and jeers from the people, whose immoral practices they censured and condemned; and many of them were even put to violent deaths (Heb. xi. 35—38). Yet, amid all these persecutions and this injurious treatment, they despised dangers, torments, and death, and with wonderful intrepidity attacked whatever was contrary to the law and worship of Jehovah; contemning secular honours, riches, and favours, with astonishing disinterestedness.

IV. Great diversity of opinion has prevailed respecting the nature, extent, permanency, and different degrees of inspiration which the prophets possessed. Not to enter into a useless discussion of conflicting sentiments, we may remark, that the communication between God and man is by prayer, by the word of God, and by his works: in old times it was also by the prophets, and before them by the angel of the Lord, and the proper symbols of the divine presence. Mankind, at first, consulted God by prayers and sacrifices at his altars. After the promulgation of the law from mount Sinai, and the establishment of the priesthood, we find three modes of communicating the divine will mentioned in the Old Testament:—1. The *Shechinah*;—2. The *Urim* and *Thummim*;—and, 3. Revelation by visions and dreams, or by inspiration. When these kinds of prophecy ceased under the second temple, they were succeeded by the *Bath Kol*, voice from heaven, or daughter of a voice, because when a voice or thunder came out from heaven, another voice issued from it: but, as we have little certain information respecting this mode of divine communication, we shall briefly notice the three kinds of prophecy just enumerated.

1. The *Shechinah* was the sitting or dwelling of God between the cherubin on the mercy-seat, or cover of the ark (Psal. lxxx. 1. and xcix. 1); whence He delivered His answers in an articulate voice (Exod. xxv. 22. xxix. 42. Numb. vii. 89).

2. The *Urim* and *Thummim* already noticed*, which was on the high-priest's breastplate (Exod. xxviii. 30), was another standing oracle, to be consulted on all great occasions (Num. xxvii. 21. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. xxiii. 9. xxx. 7. Ezra ii. 63); and the answers were returned by a visible signification of the divine will. This oracle was not only venerable among the Jews, but was also celebrated among the Greeks, as Josephus informs us †, for its infallible answers.

3. Another mode of revealing the divine will was by visions and dreams, or, as it is elegantly expressed by the Temanite, "in thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men" (Job iv. 13). Of this sort was Abraham's dream, in which Jehovah foretold the bondage of his posterity in Egypt, and their deliverance, accompanied with the promise of long life to himself before he should be gathered in peace to his fathers (Gen. xv. 12—15). Such was the dream of

* See Vol. I. p. 113.

† Ant. Jud. lib. iii. c. 8. (al. 9) § 9.

Jacob, when he beheld "a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, the angels of God ascending and descending upon it" (Gen. xxviii. 12). Abimelech was reproved and admonished in a dream by the Lord, concerning Sarah (Gen. xx. 3). The dreams of Joseph, and of Pharaoh and his servants, were divine (Gen. xxxvii. 5. xl. 5. xli. 1); as also was that of Nebuchadnezzar, respecting the fate of many kingdoms (Dan. ii. 1). All these were worthy of the divine interposition, and carried the evidence of their divine original by the revelations they made, and the strong impressions they left upon the mind. But the most frequent of these extraordinary communications of the designs of God, and of his will, was by his prophets, whom he inspired with that knowledge which was necessary for the correction and instruction of his people in every age, but more especially for the preservation of true religion among the Jews only, of all the nations of the earth, and "chiefly," as Saint Paul says, "because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. iii. 2)—those oracles which contained the gracious promise of the Messiah.

"In all the cases here described, the prophets could not, without doubting the clearest and most palpable evidence, distrust the truth of the revelations which they received; and, with respect to us, we have ample reason, from a collective consideration of their writings, to be convinced that their inspiration was accompanied with sufficient characters to distinguish it from the dreams of enthusiasm, or the visions of fancy*." Though their bodily strength was sometimes overpowered by the magnitude of their revelations, and their eyes were dazzled with the splendour of the visionary light, as in the instances of Daniel (x. 5—9) and the apostle John (Rev. i. 17), yet they retained full possession of their understanding, and the free exercise of their reason. The prophetic spirit, seating itself in the rational powers, as well as in the imagination, never alienated the mind, but informed and enlightened it; and those who were actuated by it always maintained a clearness and consistency of reason, with strength and solidity of judgment. For God did not employ idiots or fools for the purpose of revealing his will, but those whose intellects were entire and perfect; and he imprinted so clear a copy of his truth upon them, that it became their own sense, being digested fully into their understandings, so that they were able

* Dr. Gray's Key, p. 325.

to represent it to others as truly as any person can express his own thoughts *. And if at any time they did not clearly understand the prophetic revelation communicated to them, they asked for an explanation: such was the conduct of Daniel (Dan. ix. 18—23. x. 1, *et seq.*), and of Zechariah (i. 9. iv. 4. vi. 4, 5).

V. The early prophets committed nothing to writing; their predictions being only, or chiefly, of a temporary nature, are inserted in the historical books, together with their fulfilment. Such appears to have been the case with Elijah, Elisha, Micah, and others; but those who were gifted with the spirit of prophecy in its most exalted sense, and were commissioned to utter predictions the accomplishment of which was as yet far distant, were directed to write them, or cause them to be written, in a book (compare Isa. viii. 1. xxx. 8. Jer. xxx. 2. xxxvi. 2. 28. Ezek. xliii. 11. Hab. ii. 2, &c.) The predictions, thus committed to writing, were carefully preserved, under a conviction that they contained important truths, thereafter to be more fully revealed, which were to receive their accomplishment at the appointed periods. It was also the office of the prophets to commit to writing the history of the Jews †; and it is on this account that, in the Jewish classification of the books of the Old Testament, we find several historical writings arranged among the prophets. Throughout their prophetic and historical books, the utmost plainness and sincerity prevail. They record the idolatries of the nation, and foretell the judgments of God which were to befall the Jews in consequence of their forsaking his worship and service; and they have transmitted a relation of the crimes and misconduct of their best princes. David, Solomon, and others,—who were types of the Messiah, and from whose race they expected that He would descend, regarding the glories of their several reigns as presages of His,—are described not only without flattery, but also without any reserve or extenuation. They write like men who had no regard to any thing but truth and the glory of God.

The *manner* in which the prophets announced their predictions varied according to circumstances. Sometimes they ut-

* Smith's Select Discourses, pp. 190, *et seq.*

† 1 Chron. xxix. 29. 2 Chron. xii. 15. xiii. 22. xx. 34. xxvi. 22. xxxii. 32. In addition to the information thus communicated in the sacred volume, we are informed by Josephus, that, from the death of Moses until the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, the prophets who were after Moses committed to writing the transactions of their own times. Josephus cont. Apion. lib. i. c. 8.

tered them aloud in a public place; and it is in allusion to this practice that Isaiah is commanded to “cry aloud, spare not, lift up his voice like a trumpet, and show the people of God their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins (Isa. lviii. 1). Sometimes their predictions were affixed to the gates of the temple, where they might be generally read (Jer. vii. 2); but, upon important occasions, “when it was necessary to rouse the fears of a disobedient people, and to recal them to repentance, the prophets, as objects of universal attention, appear to have walked about publicly in sackcloth, and with every external mark of humiliation and sorrow. They then adopted extraordinary modes of expressing their convictions of impending wrath, and endeavoured to awaken the apprehensions of their countrymen, by the most striking illustrations of threatened punishment. Thus Jeremiah made bonds and yokes, and put them on his neck (Jer. xxvii.), strongly to intimate the subjection that God would bring on the nations whom Nebuchadnezzar should subdue. Isaiah likewise walked naked, that is, without the rough garment of the prophet, and barefoot (Isa. xx.), as a sign of the distress that awaited the Egyptians. So, Jeremiah broke the potter’s vessel (xix.); and Ezekiel publicly removed his household goods from the city, more forcibly to represent, by these actions, some correspondent calamities ready to fall on nations obnoxious to God’s wrath*; this mode of expressing important circumstances by action being customary and familiar among all eastern nations.”†

Sometimes the prophets were commanded to seal and shut up their prophecies, that the originals might be preserved until they were accomplished, and then compared with the event (Isa. viii. 16. Jer. xxxii. 14. Dan. viii. 26. and xii. 4). For, when the prophecies were not to be fulfilled till after many years, and in some cases not till after several ages, it was requisite that the original writings should be kept with the utmost care; but when the time was so near at hand, that the prophecies must be fresh in every person’s recollection, or that the originals could not be suspected or supposed to be lost, the same care was not required (Rev. xxii. 10). It seems to have been customary for the prophets to deposit their writings in the tabernacle, or lay them up before the Lord (1 Sam.

* Ezek. xii. 7. compared with 2 Kings xxv. 4, 5. where the accomplishment of this typical prophecy is related. Vide also Ezek. xxxvii. 16—20.

† Dr. Gray’s Key, p. 335.

x. 25) *. And there is a tradition †, that all the canonical books, as well as the law, were put into the side of the ark.

It is certain that the writings of the antient prophets were carefully preserved during the captivity, and they are frequently referred to, and cited, by the later prophets. Thus, the prophecy of Micah is quoted in Jer. xxvi. 18, a short time before the captivity; and, under it, the prophecy of Jeremiah is cited, in Dan. ix. 2, and the prophets, generally, in ix. 6. Zechariah not only quotes the former prophets (i. 4), but supposes their writings to be well known to the people (vii. 7). The prophet Amos is cited in the apocryphal book of Tobit (ii. 6), as Jonah and the prophets in general are in xiv. 4, 5. 8. It is evident that Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, Zechariah, and the other prophets, who flourished during the captivity, carefully preserved the writings of their inspired predecessors; for they very frequently cited and appealed to them, and expected deliverance from their captivity by the accomplishment of their predictions. ‡

VI. Although some parts of the writings of the prophets are clearly in prose, of which instances occur in the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Jonah, and Daniel, yet the other books, constituting by far the larger portion of the prophetic writings, are classed by Bishop Lowth among the poetical productions of the Jews; and (with the exception of certain passages in Isaiah, Habakkuk, and Ezekiel, which appear to constitute complete poems of different kinds, odes as well as elegies) form a particular species of poesy, which he distinguishes by the appellation of *prophetic*.

The predictions of the prophets, indeed, possess all the characteristics of Hebrew poetry, with the single exception that none of them are alphabetical or acrostic, which is an artificial arrangement utterly repugnant to the nature of prophecy. We find in them the same poetic dialect that occurs in the writings strictly called poetical; that diction so totally different from the language of common life, and other similar circumstances, which an attentive reader will easily discover, but which cannot be explained by a few examples: for circumstances, which, taken separately, appear of little consequence, are, in a united

* Josephus confirms the statement of the sacred historian. Ant. Jud. lib. vi. c. iv. § 6.

† Epiphanius, de Ponderibus et Mensuris, c. 4. Damascenus de Fide Orthodoxâ, lib. iv. c. 17.

‡ For an account of the collection and subsequent preservation of the prophetic writings, with the rest of the Jewish canon, see pp. 4—6, *supra*, of this volume.

view, frequently of the greatest importance. To these we may add that artificial conformation of the sentences, termed by Bishop Lowth the poetical parallelism *, which is a necessary concomitant of metrical composition.

The prophetic poesy is more ornamented, more splendid, and more florid than any other. It abounds more in imagery, at least that species of imagery, which, in the parabolic style, is of common and established acceptation, and which, by means of a settled analogy always preserved, is transferred from certain and definite objects to express indefinite and general ideas. Of all the images peculiar to the parabolic style, it most frequently introduces those which are taken from natural objects and sacred history: it abounds most in metaphors, allegories, comparisons, and even in copious and diffuse descriptions. It possesses all that genuine enthusiasm which is the natural attendant on inspiration; it excels in the brightness of imagination, and in clearness and energy of diction, and consequently rises to an uncommon pitch of sublimity; hence also it is often very happy in the expression and delineation of the passions, though more commonly employed in exciting them. †

VII. The prophetic books are sixteen in number, (the Lamentations of Jeremiah being usually considered as an appendix to his predictions); and in all modern editions of the Bible they are usually divided into two classes, viz. 1. The *Greater Prophets*, comprizing the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; who were thus designated from the size of their books, not because they possessed greater authority than the others ‡. 2. The *Minor Prophets*, comprizing the writings of Hosea, Joel, Amos, Jonah, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. These books were antiently written in one volume by the Jews, lest any of them should be lost, some of their writings being very short. The order, in which the books of the minor prophets are placed, is not the same in the Alexandrian or Septuagint version as in the Hebrew. According to the latter, they stand as in our translation; but in the Greek, the series is altered to the following arrangement: Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. But this change is of no consequence,

* See this subject fully discussed, *supra*, Vol. I. pp. 318—323.

† Bishop Lowth's Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, lect. xviii. xix. and xx.

‡ Qui propterea dicuntur *Minores*, quia sermones eorum sunt breves, in eorum comparatione qui *Majores* ideo vocantur, quia proluxa volumina condiderunt. Augustin. de Civ. Dei, lib. xviii. c. xxix.

since neither in the original, nor in the Septuagint, are they placed with exact regard to the time when their sacred authors respectively flourished.

Much of the obscurity, however, which hangs over the prophetic writings, may be removed by perusing them in the order of time in which they were probably written; and, though the *precise* time in which some of the prophets delivered their predictions, cannot perhaps be traced in every instance, yet the following arrangement of the prophets in their supposed order of time, (according to the tables of Blair, Archbishop Newcome*, and other eminent critics, with a few variations), will, we think, be found sufficiently correct for the right understanding of their predictions.

According to this table, the times when the prophets flourished may be referred to three periods, viz. 1. Before the Babylonian captivity;—2. Near to and during that event;—and, 3. After the return of the Jews from Babylon. And if, in these three periods, we parallel the prophetic writings with the historical books written during the same times, they will materially illustrate each other.

* Calmet, Preface Générale sur les Prophètes, in his Comment. Littéral, tom. v. pp. 557—559. Carpzov. Introd. ad Libros Biblicos Vet. Test. pars iii. c. i. pp. 1—87. Bauer, Herm. Sacr. pp. 397—404. Jahn, Introd. in Libros Sacros Vet. Fœd. pp. 310—346. Dr. Gregory Sharpe's Second Argument in Defence of Christianity from Prophecy, pp. 1—64.

Jonah,	Between 856 and 784.		Jehu, and Jehoahaz, according to Bp. Lloyd; but Joash and Jeroboam the Second, according to Blair.
Amos,	Between 810 and 785.	Uzziah, ch. i. 1.	Jeroboam the Second, ch. i. 1.
Hosea,	Between 810 and 725.	Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, the third year of Hezekiah.	Jeroboam the Second, ch. i. 1.
Isaiah,	Between 810 and 698.	Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, chap. i. 1. and perhaps Manasseth.	
Joel,	Between 810 and 660, or later.	Uzziah, or possibly Ma- nasseth.	
Micah,	Between 758 and 699.	Jotham, Ahaz, and Heze- kiah, ch. i. 1.	Pekah and Hosea.
Nahum,	Between 720 and 698.	Probably towards the close of Hezekiah's reign.	
Zephaniah,	Between 640 and 609.	In the reign of Josiah, ch. i. 1.	
Jeremiah,	Between 628 and 586.	In the thirteenth year of Josiah.	
Habakkuk,	Between 612 and 598.	Probably in the reign of Jehoiakim.	
Daniel,	Between 606 and 534.	During all the captivity.	
Obadiah,	Between 588 and 583.	Between the taking of Jeru- salem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the destruction of the Edomites by him.	
Ezekiel,	Between 595 and 536.	During part of the cap- tivity.	
Haggai,	About 520 to 518.	After the return from Babylon.	
Zechariah,	From 520 to 518, or longer.		
Malachi,	Between 436 and 397.		

SECTION II.

GENERAL RULES FOR ASCERTAINING THE SENSE OF THE
PROPHETIC WRITINGS.

PROPHECY, or the prediction of future events, may be considered as the highest evidence that can be given of supernatural communion with the Deity. Hence it has happened, that, among the professors of almost every religious system, there have been numerous pretenders to prophecy: but, while Pagan and Mohammedan pretensions have been justly exposed, the Jewish and Christian prophecies carry with them evident marks of their validity. "It is readily admitted, that a man of accurate observation *may* foretel events that appear at the time improbable to the many; and also that numerous vague and bold predictions may be so matched with subsequent circumstances, as to have very much the appearance of divine inspiration: yet the prophecies of Scripture will ever claim a decided superiority of evidence on several grounds. They are a regular chain, almost from the beginning to the end of time. Many of them relate to events, so distant and so improbable, that no human foresight could ever anticipate them. Some relate to dates and circumstances that require the most exact accomplishment, and some are fulfilling to the present time, and before our own eyes; so that, though this kind of evidence might be rendered doubtful or suspicious, yet it is daily accumulating, and gathering strength as it accumulates." The present situation of the Jews, to mention no other instance, is a permanent proof of the truth of Scripture prophecy.

There are, indeed, difficulties in understanding the prophetic writings: but these are either owing to our ignorance of history and of the Scriptures, or because the prophecies themselves are yet unfulfilled. The latter can only be understood when the events foretold have actually been accomplished: but the former class of difficulties may be removed in many, if not in all, cases; and the knowledge, sense, and meaning of the prophets may, in a considerable degree, be attained by prayer, reading, and meditation, and by comparing Scripture with Scripture, especially with the writings of the New Testament, and particularly with the book of the Revelation *. With this view, the following general rules will be

* There is scarcely an expression in this book which is not taken out of Daniel or some other prophet; Sir Isaac Newton has observed, that it is written in the same style

found useful in investigating the sense and meaning of the prophecies, as well as their accomplishment.

I. “*The sense of the prophecy is to be sought in the events of the world, and in the harmony of the prophetic writings, rather than in the bare terms of any single prediction.*” †

In the consideration of this canon, the following circumstances should be carefully attended to :

1. *Consider well the times when the several prophets flourished, in what place and under what kings they uttered their predictions, the duration of their prophetic ministry, and their personal rank and condition, and, lastly, whatever can be known respecting their life and transactions.*

These particulars, indeed, cannot in every instance be ascertained, the circumstances relating to many of the prophets being very obscure : but, where they can be known, it is necessary to attend to them, as this will materially contribute to the right understanding of the prophetic writings. ‡ Thus, in order to understand correctly the prophecy of Isaiah, we should make ourselves acquainted with the state and condition of the people of Israel under the kings Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. With this view, the books of Kings (2. xiv.—xxi.) and 2 Chron. (xvi.—xxii.) ought to be repeatedly perused and studied ; because they contain an accurate view of the state of those times.

2. *The situation of the particular places, of which the prophets speak, must also be kept in mind, as well as that of the neighbouring places ; there being in the prophetic writings frequent allusions to the situation and antient names of places.*

and language with the prophecies of Daniel, and has the same relation to them which they have to one another, so that all of them together make but one complete prophecy ; and in like manner it consists of two parts, an introductory prophecy, and an interpretation thereof. (Observations on the Apocalypse, chap. ii. p. 254). The style of the Revelations, says the profoundly learned Dr. Lightfoot, “is very prophetic as to the things spoken, and very hebraizing as to the speaking of them. Exceeding much of the old prophets’ language and manner [is] adduced to intimate New Stories : and exceeding much of the Jews’ language and allusion to their customs and opinions, thereby to speak the things more familiarly to be understood.” Harmony of the New Testament, p. 154. (Lond. 1655). See also Langii Hermeneutica Sacra, pp. 148—150.

† Bishop Horsley. This learned prelate has shown in his sermon on 2 Pet. i. 20. that the clause—*No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation*—may be more precisely thus expressed :—“*Not any prophecy of Scripture is of self-interpretation, or is its own interpreter ; because the Scripture prophecies are not detached predictions of separate independent events, but are united in a regular and entire system, all terminating in one great object,—the promulgation of the Gospel, and the complete establishment of the Messiah’s kingdom.*” Sermons, vol. ii. pp. 13—16.

‡ On the chronological order, &c. of the prophets, see pp. 214, 215, of the present volume.

When places are mentioned as lying north, south, east, or west, it is generally to be understood of their situation with respect to Judea or Jerusalem; when the context does not plainly restrict the scene to some other place. For instance, Egypt and Arabia are every where called the land of the south, because they are situate to the south of Jerusalem: thus in Daniel (ch. xi.) the *king of the south* signifies the king of Egypt, and the *king of the north*, the monarch of Syria. The *sea* is often put for the west, the Mediterranean Sea being to the west of Judea: by the *earth*, the prophets often mean the land of Judea, and sometimes the great continent of all Asia and Africa, to which they had access by land: and by the *isles of the sea*, they understood the places to which they sailed, particularly all Europe, and probably the islands and sea-coasts of the Mediterranean. The appellation of *sea* is also given to the great rivers Nile and Euphrates, which, overflowing their banks, appear like small seas or great lakes. The *Egyptian Sea*, with its *seven streams*, mentioned in Isa. xi. 15, is the Nile with its seven mouths: the *sea*, mentioned in Isa. xxvii. 1, and Jer. li. 36, is the Euphrates; and the *desert of the sea*, in Isa. xxi. 1, is the country of Babylon, watered by that river. In like manner, the Jewish people are described by several particular appellations, after the division of the kingdom in the reign of Jeroboam: thus, the ten tribes, being distinct from the other two, and subject to a different king, until the time of the Assyrian captivity, are respectively called *Samaria*, *Ephraim*, and *Joseph*; because the city of *Samaria*, which was situated in the allotment of the tribe of *Ephraim*, who was the son of Joseph, was the metropolis of the kings of Israel. Compare Isa. vii. 2. 5. 8, 9. Psal. lxxxi. 5. Hos. vii. 11. Amos v. 15. and vi. 6. They were also called Israel and Jacob, because they formed the greater part of Israel's or Jacob's posterity. The other two tribes of Judah and Benjamin are called the *kingdom of Judah*, the *house of David*, *Jerusalem* or *Sion* (Isa. vii. 13. and xl. 2. Psal. cxxvi. 1. and Isa. lii. 8), because those two tribes adhered to the family of David, from whose posterity their kings sprung, and the capital of their dominions was Jerusalem, within whose precincts was mount Sion. After their return, however, from the Babylonish captivity, the names of Israel and Judah are promiscuously applied to all the descendants of the twelve tribes who were thus restored to their native country. This is the case in the writings of the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, who all flourished after that event. In addition to the situations and names

of places, whatever relates to the history of those times must be ascertained, as far as is practicable, by consulting not only the historical books of Scripture, and the writings of Josephus (whose statements must sometimes be taken with great caution, as he has not *always* related the sacred history with fidelity), but also by comparing the narratives of Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and other profane historians, who have written on the affairs of the Chaldæans, Babylonians, Egyptians, Tyrians, Medes and Persians, and other Oriental nations, with whom the posterity of Jacob had any intercourse. Quotations from these writers may be seen in all the larger commentaries on the Bible: Prideaux's *Connexion of Sacred and Profane History*, and Bishop Newton's *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, are both particularly valuable for the illustrations of the sacred predictions which they have respectively drawn from profane authors. In the Appendix to this volume (No. VII.) we have given an Abstract of the Profane History of the East, from the time of Solomon until the Babylonish Captivity, to facilitate the better understanding of the history of the Hebrews, described in the writings of the prophets.

3. *As the prophets treat not only of past transactions and present occurrences, but also foretel future events, in order to understand them, we must diligently consult the histories of the following ages, both sacred and profane, and carefully see whether we can trace in them the fulfilment of any prophecy.*

The event is the best interpreter of a prediction: this inquiry into history, however, demands not only great labour, but also great industry and equal judgment, in order that the events may be referred to those prophecies with which they harmonize. These events must not be far-fetched; nor can they always be ascertained, because the circumstances alluded to by the prophets are often unknown to us, being yet future. Hence a considerable portion of the prophets, especially of the book of Revelation, is not only not understood, but *cannot* at present be comprehended. Some conjectures perhaps may be offered: but these should be advanced with caution, as far as they throw light upon prophecy; and, where this is wanting, we must withhold our assent from such conjectures.

4. *The words and phrases of a prophecy must be explained, where they are obscure; if they be very intricate, every single word should be expounded; and, if the sense be involved in metaphorical and emblematic expressions, (as very frequently is the case), these must be explained according to the principles already laid down.**

* See Vol. I. Chap. IV. Sections I. and III. pp. 365—375. 388—400.

No strained or far-fetched interpretation, therefore, should be admitted; and that sense of any word or phrase is always to be preferred, which is the clearest and most precise.

5. *Similar prophecies of the same event must be carefully compared, in order to elucidate more clearly the sense of the sacred predictions.*

For instance, after having ascertained the subject of the prophet's discourse and the sense of the words, Isa. liii. 5. (*He was wounded, literally pierced through, for our transgressions*) may be compared with Psal. xxii. 16. (*They pierced my hands and my feet*), and with Zech. xii. 10. (*They shall look on me whom they have pierced*). In thus paralleling the prophecies, regard must be had to the predictions of former prophets, which are sometimes repeated with abridgment, or more distinctly explained by others; and also to the predictions of subsequent prophets, who sometimes repeat, with greater clearness and precision, former prophecies, which had been more obscurely announced.

II. *In order to understand the prophets, great attention should be paid to the prophetic style, which is highly figurative, and particularly abounds in metaphorical and hyperbolical expressions.*

By images borrowed from the natural world, the prophets often understand something in the world politic. Thus, as the sun, moon, stars, and heavenly bodies, denote kings, queens, rulers, and persons in great power, the increase of splendour in those luminaries denotes increase of prosperity; as in Isa. xxx. 26. and lx. 19. On the other hand, their darkening, setting, or falling signifies a reverse of fortune, or the entire destruction of the potentate or kingdom to which they refer. In this manner the prophet Isaiah denounced the divine judgments on Babylon (Isa. xiii. 10. 13) and on Idumea (xxxiv. 4—6; and Jeremiah, on the Jews and Jerusalem (Jer. iv. 23, 24). The destruction of Egypt is predicted in similar terms by Ezekiel (xxxii. 7, 8); and also the terrible judgments that would befall the unbelieving Jews, by Joel (ii. 28—31). And Jesus Christ himself employed the same phraseology in foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans (Matt. xxiv. 29).

In further illustration of this rule it may be observed, that the prophetic writings contain numerous figures and similitudes that appear strange to our habits and modes of thinking; but which in their times were perfectly familiar. These figures and similitudes, therefore, must not be interpreted according to our notions of things, but agreeably to the genius of Oriental writing: for instance, very numerous metaphors are taken from

agriculture and the pastoral life, which were common pursuits among the Jews, some of the prophets themselves having been herdsmen or shepherds. However humble such employments may appear to us, they were not accounted servile at the time the prophets flourished. Other representations of events, that were to come to pass under the New Testament dispensation, are drawn from the sacred rites of the Jews. Thus, the conversion of Egypt to the Gospel is foretold (Isa. xix. 19. 21) *by setting up an altar, and offering sacrifice to the Lord*; and the conversion of the Gentiles in general (Mal. i. 11) by the offering up of incense. The service of God under the Gospel is set forth (Zech. xiv. 16) *by going up to Jerusalem, and keeping the feast of tabernacles there*; and the abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit, in the miraculous gifts which attended the preaching of the Gospel, is represented (Joel ii. 28) *by prophesying, and dreaming dreams, and seeing visions*. In this passage the prophet did not intend to say, that these things should literally and actually take place under the Christian dispensation: but, in order that his meaning might be the better understood by those whom he addressed, he expressed the abundant measure of gifts and Gospel light by images drawn from those privileges which were at that time most highly valued by the Jews.

But, although the prophets thus frequently employ words in a figurative or metaphorical meaning, yet we ought not, *without necessity*, to depart from the primitive sense of their expressions: and that necessity exists, only when the plain and original sense is less proper, as well as less suitable to the subject and context, or contrary to other passages of Scripture. But, even in this case, we must carefully assign to each prophetic symbol its proper and definite meaning, and never vary from that meaning.

III. *As the greater part of the prophetic writings was first composed in verse, and still retains much of the air and cast of the original, an attention to the division of the lines, and to that peculiarity of Hebrew poetry by which the sense of one line or couplet so frequently corresponds with another, will frequently lead to the meaning of many passages; one line of a couplet, or member of a sentence, being generally a commentary on the other.*

Of this rule we have an example in Isa. xxxiv. 6:

The Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah,
And a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

Here the metaphor in the first verse is expressed in the same terms in the next: the sacrifice in Bozrah means the great

slaughter in the land of Idumea, of which Bozrah was the capital. Similar instances occur in Isa. xliv. 3. and lxi. 10. and in Micah vi. 6. in which the parallelism is more extended. *

IV. *Particular names are often put by the prophets for more general ones, in order that they may place the thing represented, as it were, before the eyes of their hearers : but in such passages they are not to be understood literally.*

Thus, in Joel iii. 4, *Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Palestine*, are put, by way of poetical description, for all the enemies of the Jews ; and the Greeks and Sabeans for distant nations. In like manner the prophet Amos (ch. ix. 12), when speaking of the enemies of the Jews, mentions *the remnant of Edom, or the Idumeans*.

V. *It is usual with the prophets to express the same thing in a great variety of expressions ; whence they abound in amplifications, each rising above the other in strength and beauty.*

For instance, when describing drought or famine, they accumulate together numerous epithets, to represent the sorrow that would accompany those calamities : on the other hand, when delineating plenty, they pourtray, in a great variety of expressions, the joy of the people possessed of abundance of grain ; and in like manner the horrors of war and the blessings of peace, the misery of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous, are contrasted with numerous illustrations. It were unnecessary to cite examples, as we can scarcely open a single page of the prophetic writings without seeing instances : but in reading such passages it is not to be supposed that each individual phrase possesses a distinct and peculiar sense.

VI. *The order of time is not always to be looked for in the prophetic writings : for they frequently resume topics of which they have formerly treated, after other subjects have intervened, and again discuss them.*

Jeremiah and Ezekiel may, in particular, be cited as instances of this abruptness of style, who spoke of various things as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and as occasion required ; and whose discourses, being first dispersed, were afterwards collected together without regard to the order of time. In the midst of the mention of particular mercies promised to, or of judgments denounced against, the people of God, the prophets sometimes break forth into sublime predictions concerning the Messiah : these digressions appear extremely abrupt and incoherent to those who do not consider how

* See several examples of the above rule cited in Vol. I. pp. 318—323. On the structure of prophetic poesy, see also pp. 212, 213, of the present volume.

seasonable the mention of Christ may be, in conjunction with that of the mercies of God, (of which he is the foundation and pinnacle, the ground and consummation), and with the threats of the judgments of God, in which he was his people's grand consolation*. A careful examination, however, of the plan and distribution of the different prophetic books will always enable the diligent reader to trace the arrangement and scope of the respective prophecies. Where, indeed, a new prediction or discourse is distinguished from a former one by a new title, as in Haggai i. 1. and ii. 1. 10. 20, it is an easy task to trace such arrangement and scope: but where the prophets do not introduce any new titles (Hosea for instance), it becomes very difficult. Vitringa has laid it down as a canon †, that in *continued* predictions, which are not distinguished one from another by titles or inscriptions, we should carefully attend both to the *beginning* and *end* of the prophetic sermon, as well as to the period of time in which the scene of the prophetic vision is fixed, and to the period in which it ends. This will tend to illustrate the sermons or discourses of Isaiah, in the forty-first and following chapters of his prophecy.

It is however probable that those prophecies,—whose *terminus à quo* demonstrates the beginning of the time of Christ's kingdom, and the *terminus ad quem* the end of that time,—give a narration of the principal events that shall befall the church in a continued series, unless any thing intervene which may require us to go back to former times. Upon this foundation depends the interpretation of Isa. liv. 1. to lx. 22. The commencement of this prophecy unquestionably belongs to the beginning of Messiah's kingdom; the term or end falls upon the most flourishing state of that kingdom, which is to follow the conversion of the Jewish nation, and the vindication of the afflicted church, which deliverance, as well as the flourishing state of Christ's kingdom, are described in Isa. lix. 19—21. and lx. throughout.

VII. *The prophets often change both persons and tenses, sometimes speaking in their own persons, at other times representing God, his people, or their enemies, as respectively speaking, and without noticing the change of person; sometimes taking things past or present for things future, to denote the certainty of the events.*

Isa. ix. 6. liii. throughout, lxiii. throughout, Zech. ix. 9, and Rev. xviii. 2, to cite no other passages, may be adduced

* Boyle on the Style of the Holy Scriptures, Works, vol. ii. p. 271.

† Typus Doctrinæ Propheticae, p. 179.

as examples of this canon: attention to the scope and context of the prophetic discourse will here also, as in the preceding rule, enable the reader to distinguish the various transitions with sufficient accuracy. *

It may here be further observed, that, in the computation of time, a *day* is used by the prophets to denote a *year*; a *week*, seven years; and that, when they speak of the *latter*, or *last days*, they invariably mean the days of the Messiah, or the time of the Gospel dispensation. The expression *that day* often means the same time, and always some period at a distance.

VIII. *As symbolic actions and prophetic visions greatly resemble parables, and were employed for the same purpose, viz. more powerfully to instruct and engage the attention of the people, they must be interpreted in the same manner as parables.* †

We must therefore chiefly consider the scope and design of such symbolic actions and prophetic visions, without attempting too minute an explanation of all the poetical images and figures with which the sacred writers adorned their style. For instance, in Zech. i. 7—11, it is not necessary to inquire what is meant by the *man riding upon a red horse, and standing among the myrtle trees*: this vision represents so many angels returning (probably from the kingdoms over which they presided) to give to Jehovah an account of their expedition and ministry. The horses, it has been conjectured, denote their power and celerity; and the different colours the difference of their ministries. The *scope* of the vision, however, is sufficiently plain: the angels tell that all the earth was *sitting still and at rest*; the Persian empire, and other nations connected with Judea, enjoying peace at that time, though the Jews continued in an unsettled state. ‡

* This change of tense, however, is not exclusively confined to predictions of future events: it is sometimes used by the prophets to represent duties as performed which ought to be done; thus, in Mal. i. 6. *A son honours* (ought to honour) *his father*. But it is more frequently employed by the writers of the New Testament to express both our Christian privileges, and the duties to which they oblige us. Thus, Matt. v. 13. *Ye are* (ought to be) *the salt of the earth*. Rom. ii. 4. *The goodness of God leadeth* (ought to lead) *thee to repentance*. 2 Cor. iii. 18. *We all, with open face beholding, (enjoying the means of beholding) as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are* (ought to be) *changed into the same image from glory to glory*. Similar instances may be seen in 1 Cor. v. 7. Col. iii. 3. Heb. xiii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 6. 1 John ii. 15. iii. 9. and v. 4. 18. Dr. Taylor's Key to the Apostolic Writings, § 274. (Bishop Watson's Tracts, vol. iii. p. 421).

† On the construction of parabolic language, see Vol. I. pp. 408—422, *supra*.

‡ Archbishop Newcome on Zech. i. 7—11.

SECTION III.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROPHECY
IN GENERAL.

A Prophecy is demonstrated to be fulfilled, when we can prove that the event has actually taken place, precisely according to the manner in which it was foretold, either from sacred history, where that is practicable, or from profane authors of unimpeachable veracity; whose characters stand so high, that they cannot possibly be suspected of having forged any thing to favour the idea of its accomplishment. In order to ascertain whether a prediction has been fulfilled, we must first endeavour to find out the general scheme of the prophecy in question, by a careful comparison of the parts with the whole, and with corresponding prophecies both earlier and later; and to classify the various things spoken of, lest the judgment be perplexed with the multitude of references. And, secondly, in our deductions from the prophecies thus arranged, those predictions and their respective accomplishments are principally to be selected and urged, which chiefly tend to remove all suspicion of their taking place by accident, or being foretold by some happy conjecture. Now this may be done, by showing the vast *distance of time* between the prophecy and the event foretold; the *agreement* of very many, even of the minutest circumstances, so that, when completed, the description determinately applies to the subject;—and, lastly, the *dependence of actions* upon the uncertain will of man, or upon opportunity presenting itself: for *all* these things are of such a nature, that no unassisted human intellect either can or could possibly foresee them. These two general observations being premised, we now proceed to offer a few canons by which to ascertain the accomplishment of prophecy.

I. *The same prophecies frequently have a double meaning, and refer to different events, the one near, the other remote; the one temporal, the other spiritual, or perhaps eternal. The prophets thus having several events in view, their expressions may be partly applicable to one, and partly to another, and it is not always easy to mark the transitions. What has not been fulfilled in the first, we must apply to the second; and what has already been fulfilled, may often be considered as typical of what remains to be accomplished.*

The double sense of prophecy has been opposed with much ingenuity by Mr. Whiston, Dr. Sykes, Dr. Benson, and Dr. Faber, in this country, and by Father Balthus in France, as

well as by most of the German theologians, who severally contend that the antient prophecies contain only one sense: but that the rule above stated is correct, we apprehend will appear from the following remarks and illustrations.

“Throughout the whole of prophetic scripture, a time of retribution and of vengeance on God’s enemies is announced. It is called “*the day of the Lord*,” “*the day of wrath and slaughter; of the Lord’s anger, visitation, and judgment*,” “*the great day*,” and “*the last day*.” At the same time, it is to be observed, that this kind of description, and the same expressions, which are used to represent this great day, are also employed by the prophets to describe the fall and punishment of particular states and empires; of Babylon, by Isaiah, (ch. xiii); of Egypt, by Ezekiel, (ch. xxx. 2—4, and xxxii. 7—8); of Jerusalem, by Jeremiah, Joel, and by our Lord, (Matt. xxiv.); and in many of these prophecies, the description of the calamity, which is to fall on any *particular* state or nation, is so blended and intermixed with that *general* destruction, which, in the final days of vengeance, will invade *all* the inhabitants of the earth, that the industry and skill of our ablest interpreters have been scarcely equal to separate and assort them. Hence it has been concluded, by judicious divines, that these partial prophecies and particular instances of the divine vengeance, whose accomplishment we know to have taken place, are presented to us as types, certain tokens, and forerunners, of some greater events which are also disclosed in them. To the dreadful time of universal vengeance, they all appear to look forward, beyond their first and more immediate object. Little indeed can we doubt that such is to be considered the use and application of these prophecies, since we see them thus applied by our Lord and his apostles.” *

* Dr. Woodhouse on the Apocalypse, pp. 172, 173. One of the most remarkable of these prophecies, he observes, is that splendid one of Isaiah, ch. xxxiv.; the importance and universality of which is to be collected from the manner in which it is introduced: “*All nations and people, the world and all things in it*,” are summoned to the audience. It represents “*the day of the Lord’s vengeance*,” and the year of the *recompenses* for the controversy of Sion (ver. 8); it descends on *all nations* and *their armies* (ver. 2.) The images of wrathful vengeance and utter dissolution are the same which are presented under the sixth seal in the Revelation of St. John (vi. 12—17). The hosts of heaven are dissolved; the heavens are rolled together as a scroll of parchment; the stars fall, like a leaf from a vine, or a fig from its tree. And yet *Idumea* is mentioned by the prophet as the *particular* object of vengeance: such seems to be the *typical* completion and *primary* application of this prophecy: but it has evidently a more sublime and future prospect, and in this sense the *whole world* is its object: and using the same symbols and figurative expressions with the prophecy of the sixth seal, with those of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and, above all, sixteenth chapters of the Apocalypse, and with others of the Old and New Testaments, it must, with them, be finally referred to the *great day* of the Lord’s vengeance for its perfect completion.” Ibid. p. 174.

The second psalm is primarily an inauguration hymn, composed by David, the anointed of Jehovah, when crowned with victory, and placed triumphant on the sacred hill of Sion. But, in Acts iv. 25, the inspired apostles with one voice declare it to be descriptive of the exaltation of the Messiah, and of the opposition raised against the Gospel, both by Jews and Gentiles.—The latter part of the sixteenth psalm is spoken of David's person, and is unquestionably, in its first and immediate sense, to be understood of him, and of his hope of rising after death to an endless life: but it is equally clear from Acts ii. 25—31, that it was spoken of Christ, the son of David, who was typified by that king and prophet.—The twenty-second psalm, though primarily intended of David when he was in great distress and forsaken by God, is yet, secondarily and mystically, to be understood of our blessed Saviour during his passion upon the cross; and so it is applied by himself (Matt. xxvii. 46). And it is further observable, that other passages of this psalm (v. 8. 16. 18) are noticed by the evangelist, as being fulfilled at that time, (Matt. xxvii. 35. 43); now it is certain that they could not be fulfilled, unless they had been intended in this mysterious sense of Jesus Christ. The forty-fifth psalm is originally a *song of loves*, an epithalamium on the nuptials of King Solomon and the King of Egypt's daughter; but from Heb. i. 8. we are assured that it is addressed to Christ; and therefore, in a remote and spiritual sense, it celebrates the majesty and glory of his kingdom, his mystical union with his church, and the admirable benefits that would be conferred upon her in the times of the gospel.

It were no difficult task to adduce many other psalms in which the double sense is most clearly to be discerned*: we therefore proceed to cite a few instances from the writings of the prophets.

Isaiah vii. 14. In the *primary* but lower sense of this prophecy, the sign given was to assure Ahaz that the land of Judea would speedily be delivered from the kings of Samaria and Damascus, by whom it was invaded. But the in-

* Bishop Horne, in the preface to his admirable commentary on the Psalms, has noticed a considerable number of those divine odes, which bear a double meaning, the propriety of which he has fully vindicated. Works, vol. ii. pp. x.—xx. Almost the whole of the Psalms are applied by Bishop Horsley to the Messiah, in his "Book of Psalms translated from the Hebrew," 2 vols. 8vo. But Bishop Marsh has endeavoured to shew that there are no double meanings, or, as he terms them, *secondary senses*, in prophecy. Lectures on Divinity, part iv. lect. 22.

trodition of the prophecy, the singular stress laid upon it, and the exact sense of the terms in which it was expressed, make it in a high degree probable that it had another and more important purpose: and the event has clearly proved that the *sign given* had, secondarily and mystically, a respect to the miraculous birth of Christ, and to a deliverance much more momentous than that of Ahaz from his then present distressful situation.

Isa. xi. 6. What is here said of the wolf dwelling with the lamb, &c. is understood as having its *first* completion in the reign of Hezekiah, when profound peace was enjoyed after the troubles caused by Sennacherib; but its *second* and full completion is under the Gospel, whose power in changing the hearts, tempers, and lives of the worst of men, is here foretold and described by a singularly beautiful assemblage of images. Of this blessed power there has, in every age of Christianity, been a cloud of witnesses; although its most glorious æra, predicted in this passage, may not yet be arrived. The latter part of the same chapter, in which there are many beautiful allusions to the exode from Egypt, seems to refer principally to the future restoration of the Jews from their several dispersions, and to that happy period when they and the Gentiles shall stand together under the banner of Jesus, and unite their zeal in extending the limits of his kingdom. This is a favourite theme with Isaiah, who is usually and justly designated the Evangelical Prophet; and who (ch. xl.) predicted the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, and their restoration to the land of Canaan;—events which were primarily and literally accomplished, but which by the evangelist Matthew (iii. 3), and by our Lord himself (Matt. xi. 10), are said to have been fulfilled by John the Baptist's preaching in the wilderness of Judea; and which, secondarily and spiritually, foretold the deliverance of mankind from the infinitely greater bondage of sin.

Once more.—Hos. xi. 1. *Out of Egypt have I called my son.* This passage, in its literal sense, was meant of God's delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt; but, in its secondary and mystical sense, there can be no doubt that an allusion was intended by the Holy Spirit to the call of the infant Christ out of the same country. (Matt. ii. 15.)

Thus it is evident that many prophecies *must be taken in a double sense*, in order to understand their full import; and this twofold application of them, by our Lord and his apostles, is a full authority for us to consider and apply them in a similar

way. In order to ascertain whether a prophecy is to be taken in a double sense, the following rules have been laid down by the celebrated Vitranga. *

1. That we may attain an accurate and distinct knowledge of the *subject* of a prediction, we must carefully attend to all the *attributes* and *characters* which are applied to that subject in such prophecy: for, if the subject be not specifically mentioned by *name*, it may be discovered by its characteristics; of this description are many of the prophecies concerning Christ. And if the subject be named, we must inquire whether it is to be taken properly or mystically, or partly properly and partly mystically; for instance, when any person or thing is particularly named as a type of the Messiah.

2. We must not, however, depart from the literal sense of the subject, when called by its own proper name, if all the attributes, or the principal and more remarkable ones, agree with the subject of the prophecy. This rule will be found of considerable use, in interpreting the prophecies concerning Israel, Judah, Tyre, Babylon, Egypt, and other countries and places.

3. If the attributes by no means agree with the subject expressed in a prophecy by its own name, we must think of another subject answerable to it, which is called by this name, on account of the agreement between the type and antitype. Examples of this occur in the prophecies concerning Edom, (Isa. lxiii. 1—6), David (Ezek. xxxiv. 24—31), and Elijah (Mal. iv. 5).

4. If, in prophecies, the subject be treated of under its express name, so that it will bear both the proper and mystical interpretation, and the attributes of the prophetic discourse be such, that some of them agree more strictly with the subject mystically taken, while others are more correctly predicated of it in a literal and grammatical sense;—in such cases, we must take the subject of the prophecy to be, not simple, but *complex*: and that the prophet, being influenced and illuminated by the Holy Spirit, expresses himself in such a manner as to be understood of both; and the reader is to be apprized of the mystical or allegorical sense, as enveloped in the literal sense. Thus, many of the prophecies concerning Babylon, Edom, Egypt, and Tyre, contain such august and magnificent ex-

* In his *Typus Doctrinæ Propheticae*, cap. ii. Dr. Apthorpe has translated twenty of Vitranga's canons (which are admirably illustrated by numerous examples in his valuable commentary on Isaiah) in his *Lectures on Prophecy*, vol. i. p. 90, and following. Jahn has given several additional examples. *Introd. ad Vet. Fœdus*, pp. 332—334.

pressions, as, if taken properly, will admit of a very poor and barren exposition: and therefore it must be presumed that the Holy Spirit designed something more, and to lead our minds to the mystical Babylon, &c. In like manner, such grand things are sometimes spoken concerning the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, and mention is made of such distinguished blessings being bestowed upon them, as necessarily lead us to look for a further and more complete fulfilment in the redemption by Jesus Christ, and the spiritual blessings of grace bestowed upon the people of God, under the Gospel dispensation. Isa. lii. 1—3, and Jer. iii. 14—18, to cite no other examples, present very striking illustrations of this remark. Hence it follows that,

5. Prophecies of a general nature are applicable by accommodation to individuals; most of the things, which are spoken of the church, being equally applicable to her individual members.

6. Prophecies of a particular nature, on the other hand, admit, and often require, an extended sense: for instance, Edom, Moab, or any of the enemies of God's people, are often put for the whole; what is said of one being generally applicable to the rest. And, in like manner, what is said either to or concerning God's people, on any particular occasion, is of general application; as all, who stand in the same relation to God, have an interest in the same prophecies.

II. *Predictions, denouncing judgments to come, do not in themselves speak the absolute futurity of the event, but only declare what is to be expected by the persons to whom they are made, and what will certainly come to pass, unless God in his mercy interpose between the threatening and the event.*

“So that comminations do speak only the *debitum pœnæ*, and the necessary obligation to punishment: but therein God doth not bind up himself as he doth in absolute promises; the reason is, because comminations confer no right to any, which absolute promises do, and therefore God is not bound to necessary performance of what he threatens. Indeed the guilt or obligation to punishment is necessary, where the offence hath been committed, to which the threatening was annexed: but the execution of that punishment doth still depend upon God's arbitrary will, and therefore he may suspend or remove it upon serious addresses made to himself in order to it. For, since God was pleased not to take the present forfeiture of the first grand transgression, but made such a relaxation of that penal law, that conditions of pardon were admittable, notwithstanding sentence passed upon the malefactors, there is strong

ground of presumption in human nature, that God's forbearance of mankind, notwithstanding sin, doth suppose his readiness to pardon offenders upon their repentance, and therefore that all particular threatenings of judgments to come do suppose incorrigibleness in those against whom they are pronounced: upon which the foundation of hope is built, that, if timely repentance do intervene, God will remove those judgments which are threatened against them*:" of these conditional comminatory predictions we have examples in Jonah's preaching to the Ninevites (Jonah iii. 4—10), and in Isaiah's denunciation of death to Hezekiah (Isa. xxxviii. 1). See also a similar instance in Jer. xxxviii. 14—23.

III. *Predictions then express divine purposes, when many prophets in several ages concur in the same predictions.*—“Because it is hardly seen but all those tacit conditions, which are supposed in general promises or comminations, may be altered in different ages: but, when the conditions alter, and the predictions continue the same, it is a stronger evidence that it is some immutable counsel of God, which is expressed in those predictions. And in this case one prediction confirms the foregoing, as the Jews say of prophets, “*one prophet that hath the testimony of another prophet, is supposed to be true:*” but it must be with this supposition, that the other prophet was before approved to be a true prophet. Now, both these meet in the prophecies concerning our Saviour: for to him bear all the prophets witness, and in their several ages they had several things revealed to them concerning him; and the uniformity and perfect harmony of all these several prophecies by persons at so great distance from each other, and being of several interests and employments, and in several places, yet all giving light to each other, and exactly meeting at last in the accomplishment, do give us yet a further and clearer evidence, that all those several beams came from the same sun, when all those scattered rays were at last gathered into one body again at the appearance of the Sun of Righteousness in the world.” †

* Stillingfleet's *Origines Sacrae*, book ii. chap. vi. §10. pp. 120, 121. 8th edit. Jahn, *Enchiridion Hermeneutica*, pp. 148, 149.

† Stillingfleet, p. 120.

SECTION IV.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROPHECIES
CONCERNING THE MESSIAH IN PARTICULAR. *

I. *JESUS CHRIST* being the great subject and end of Scripture revelation, we ought every where to search for prophecies concerning him.

We are assured by Christ himself that the Scriptures testify of him (John v. 39), and that in Moses, the Psalms, and Prophets, there are things concerning him (Luke xxiv. 25—27. 44): further, we have the declaration of an inspired apostle, that to him give all the prophets witness (Acts x. 43), and of an angel of God, that “*the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*” (Rev. xix. 10). It may therefore be remarked generally, that whatsoever is emphatically and characteristically spoken of some certain person, not called by his own name, in the psalms or prophetic books, so that each predicate can be fully demonstrated in no single subject of that or any other time, must be taken as said and predicted of the Messiah. The twenty-second psalm, and the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah’s prophecy, may be adduced in illustration of this rule, which will not mislead any student or reader of the sacred volume. The four remarks in pp. 229, 230, may be advantageously employed in the application of this rule.

II. *The interpretation of the word of prophecy, made by Jesus Christ himself, and by his inspired apostles, is a rule and key by which to interpret correctly the prophecies cited or alluded to by them.*

The propriety of this canon must be obvious: for as every one is the best interpreter of his own words, so the Holy Spirit, (under whose influence the antient prophets wrote and spoke,) in more recent prophecies, refers to former predictions, and often uses the same words, phrases, and images, thus leading us to understand the true sense of those oracles†. For instance, the prophecy (in Isa. viii. 14) that the Messiah would prove a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, is more plainly repeated by Simeon (Luke ii. 34), and is shown to

* Bishop Marsh (Margaret Lectures, part iv. lect. xx. and xxi.) has several admirable observations on the connexion subsisting between the truth of Christianity and the prophecies relating to the Messiah: nearly the whole of Lecture xxi. is occupied with examples of predictions literally and strictly *foretelling the coming of Christ*.

† Bishop Lowth has some fine remarks on this topic toward the close of his eleventh Lecture.

have been fulfilled by St. Paul (Rom. ix. 32. 33), and by St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 8).

II. *Since it is certain that there are, in the prophetic parts of the Scriptures, distinct delineations of the whole counsel of God concerning Messiah's kingdom, those interpreters act rightly, who, in prophecies that evidently treat of the kingdom of Christ and its affairs, industriously attend to the events concerning the Christian church, which are known from history, and apply them accordingly; provided this be done without doing violence to the Scripture, since "Jehovah doeth nothing, but he revealeth his secrets unto his servants the prophets" (Amos iii. 7).*

The prophecies of Daniel and John are concurrent in very many circumstances concerning the church of Christ; and it is only by the application of this rule that learned and pious men have been able to trace the accomplishment of many parts of their predictions.

III. *Where the prophets describe a golden age of felicity, they clearly foretel Gospel times.*

At the time the prophets respectively flourished, the Israelites and Jews were, in general, notoriously wicked, although, even in the worst of times, there was a considerable number who feared Jehovah. Hence, while the prophets denounce national judgments upon the wicked, (in which temporal afflictions the righteous would necessarily be involved,) they at the same time hold out to the latter, to strengthen their trust in God, predictions of future and better times; and, with promises of some great and temporal deliverance, they invariably connect a display of the yet greater though future deliverance of the Messiah; the peace and happiness, that are to prevail in consequence of that deliverance, are pourtrayed in such a beautiful assemblage of images, and delineate so high a state of felicity, that, as there is no period in the history of the world, prior to the Christian dispensation, to which they can in any way be applied, these predictions of future happiness and peace must necessarily be understood exclusively to refer to Gospel times. Many passages might be adduced from the prophetic writings in confirmation of this rule. It will however suffice to adduce two instances from Isaiah ch. ix. 2—7, and xi. 1—9. In the former of these passages, the peaceful kingdom of the Messiah is set forth, its extent and duration; and in the latter, the singular peace and happiness which should then prevail, are delineated in imagery of unequalled beauty and energy.*

* Rambach, Inst. Herm. pp. 175—177. J. B. Carpzov, Primæ Lineæ Hermeneuticæ, pp. 25, 26.

IV. *Things, foretold as universally or indefinitely to come to pass under the Gospel, are to be understood,—as they respect the duty,—of all persons ; but,—as they respect the event,—only of God's people.*

Thus, when the peace, that is foretold to prevail in Gospel times, is stated to be so great that men should then *beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks*; that nation should not *lift up sword against nation, neither learn war any more* (Isa. ii. 4); and that *the wolf should lie down with the lamb, and the leopard with the kid*, (Isa. xi. 6. and lxxv. 25, with other passages that might be adduced);—all these highly figurative expressions are to be understood of the nature, design, and tendency of the Gospel, and what is the duty of all its professors, and what would actually take place in the Christian world, if all who profess the Christian doctrine did sincerely and cordially obey its dictates. And, so far as the Gospel does prevail upon any, it reclaims their wild and unruly natures; from being furious as wolves, they become meek as lambs, and, from raging like lions, they become gentle and tender as kids; so far are they from hurting or injuring others, that they dare not entertain any the slightest thoughts of malevolence or revenge, towards their most inveterate enemies.

V. *As the antient prophecies concerning the Messiah are of two kinds, some of them relating to his first coming to suffer, while the rest of them concern his second coming to advance his kingdom, and restore the Jews ;—in all these prophecies, we must carefully distinguish between his first coming in humiliation to accomplish his mediatorial work on the cross, and his second coming in glory to judgment.*

This distinction is sufficiently obvious in those passages which treat of either coming, separately, as in Isa. vii. 14, ix. 6, liii. &c. which treat of his *first coming* in the flesh; and in Isa. ii. 10—21, which refers to his *second coming* to judgment. To the former must be referred all those passages which relate to his humiliation. But it is more difficult to distinguish each advent in those passages, in which the prophet makes an *immediate* transition from the one to the other. For instance, in Isa. xl. 1—9, the prediction relates to the first advent of Christ, but in v. 10. his second coming to judgment is noticed, express mention being made of the solemn work of retribution, which is peculiar to judgment. Again, in Jer. xxiii. 5—7, the promise of sending the Son of God into the world is, in v. 8, joined with a prophecy concerning the conversion of the

Jews, which is yet future. A similar instance of uniting the two advents of Christ occurs in Mal. iii. 1—5. By distinguishing, however, between them, we shall be better able to combat the objections of the Jews, who apply to the Messiah all those predictions which refer to a state of exaltation, while they overlook all those plain, though less numerous prophecies, in which is described Messiah's first coming in a state of humiliation.

Before we dismiss the important subject of prophecy, there are two cautions, which must uniformly be kept in view in studying the prophetic writings.

The first is, *that we do not apply passing events as actually fulfilling particular prophecies.* It has justly been remarked, that "a commentator upon the predictions of Daniel and John can never be too much upon his guard against the fascinating idea, that he may expect to find *every passing event of his own day* there predicted. Before he ventures to introduce any exposition founded upon *present* circumstances, he ought to make it clearly appear that it both accords with the *chronological* order so carefully preserved in those prophecies, that it strictly harmonizes with the *language of symbols*, and that it demonstrates every part of the prediction to tally *exactly* with its supposed accomplishment." *

The other caution is, *that we do not curiously pry beyond what is expressly written, or describe as fulfilled prophecies which are yet future.* "Such secret things" as unaccomplished prophecies, "belong unto the Lord our God:" and it is a vain waste of time to weary ourselves with conjectures respecting the *precise* mode of their accomplishment. Upon these points, when we go beyond what is written, we exceed our commission: and it has almost invariably been found, that a commentator, who attempted to show *how* a prophecy was about to be fulfilled, was by the event convicted of error. We may safely and positively declare what will come to pass, and we may even say *how* it will come to pass, so long as we resolutely confine ourselves to the *explicit declarations of Scripture*; but to point out the *manner* in which an event will be accomplished, *any further than the word of God* hath revealed the manner of it, is to pry too curiously into what he hath purposely concealed, and to aim at becoming prophets, instead of contenting ourselves with being humble and fallible expositors of prophecy. What

* Faber's Dissertation on the Prophecies, vol. ii. p. 277.

the Bible hath declared, that *we* may without hesitation declare: beyond this, all is mere vague conjecture.”*

On the subject of apparent contradictions between prophecies and their accomplishment, see Vol. I. pp. 458—462, *supra*.†

* Faber's Dissertation on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 77.

† In addition to the writers cited in the course of this chapter, it may be stated that the fulfilment of prophecy is fully considered by Bishop Newton, in his “Dissertations,” 2 vols. 8vo. See also Sir Isaac Newton's Observations on Daniel and the Apocalypse, 4to. Rambachii Observationes Selectæ de Parallelismo Sacro, pp. 219—235, and his Instit. Hermeneuticæ Sacræ, pp. 741—745, 779—791. J. E. Pfeifferi, Inst. Herm. Sacr. pp. 79—812. Langii Hermeneutica Sacra, pp. 133—150. Turretin de Sacræ Scripturæ Interpretatione, cap. 4. pp. 244—255: in pp. 256—295, he has given an admirable illustration of the principles laid down by him in the preceding chapter, by expounding chapters i. and ii. of the prophecy of Joel; Bishop Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses, book vi. (works, vol. vi. pp. 47, *et seq.*); Dr. Hey's Norrisian Lectures, vol. i. pp. 235—240;—Dr. Smith's View of the Prophets, 12mo.; Bishop Hurd's Introduction to the Study of the Prophets; (works, vol. v.) Dr. Macknight's Translation and Commentary on the Epistles, vol. iv. (4to edit.) or vi. (8vo edit.) Essay viii. sect. v.; Mr. Frere's Combined View of the Prophecies of Daniel, Esdras, and St. John, 8vo; and the Rev. Wm. Jones's Lectures on the Figurative Language of Scripture, (works, vol. iii). These writers have all been consulted on the present occasion: and to the list of them may be added Bishop Sherlock's Discourses on Prophecy; Mr. Kett's History the Interpreter of Prophecy; Bishops Hallifax and Bagot, Drs. Apthorpe and Pearson, and Mr. Nares, in their respective Warburtonian Lectures on Prophecy, and Smith's Select Discourses.—Disc. vi. pp. 167—280.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE PROPHETS WHO FLOURISHED BEFORE THE BABY-
LONIAN CAPTIVITY.

SECTION I.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JONAH.

I. *Title and Author*;—II. *Occasion of the Prophecy of Jonah*;—
III. *Scope*;—IV. *Synopsis of its Contents*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 856—784.

I. **THIS** Book is, by the Hebrews, called *Sepher Jonah*, or the Book of Jonah, from its author Jonah, the son of Amittai, who was a native of Gath-Hepher in Galilee. (Jon. i. 1, with Josh. xix. 13). He is supposed to have prophesied to the ten tribes, according to Bishop Lloyd, towards the close of Jehu's reign, or in the beginning of Jehoahaz's reign; though Blair and other chronologers place him under Joash and Jeroboam II. about forty years later. With the exception of his sublime ode in the second chapter, the prophecy of Jonah is a simple narrative.

II. It is very probable, that, when Jonah promised the restoring and enlarging of the "coasts of Israel" in the days of Jeroboam II., when both the king and people were exceedingly wicked, he also invited them to repentance and reformation. But the Israelites still continuing impenitent and obdurate, God took occasion to send him to Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, to denounce the impending divine judgments against its abandoned inhabitants. Jonah, declining the commission, was cast into the sea from the vessel in which he was sailing to Tarshish, and was swallowed by a large fish*; not, says Irenæus†, that he might be swallowed up, but that, by his miraculous deliverance, (preparing Jonah to preach more dutifully, and the Ninevites to hear more effectually), the people of Israel might be provoked to repent by the repentance of Nineveh. The time of Jonah's continuance in the belly of the fish was a type of our Lord's continuance in the grave (Luke xi. 30). The fame of the prophet's miraculous preservation was so widely propagated as to reach even Greece; whence, as Grotius, Huet, Bochart, and

* On this subject, see Vol. I. p. 493, *supra*. † *Adversus Hæres. lib. iii. c. 22.*

other learned men have remarked, the story was derived of Hercules having escaped alive out of the fish's belly. *

III. The scope of this book is to show, by the very striking example of the Ninevites, the divine forbearance and long-suffering towards sinners, who are spared on their sincere repentance. From the conduct of the Ninevites, Jesus Christ takes occasion to reprove the perfidiousness of the Jews (Matt. xii. 41). The evidence offered by Jonah was sufficient to convince and lead the former to repentance; while the Jews, who had the greater evidence of miracles, and the more convincing evidence of our Saviour's doctrine, continued obstinately impenitent. Some critics have imagined that the prophecy of Jonah is a parabolic history; but from the manner in which the sacred historians and Jesus Christ speak of him (2 Kings xiv. 25, Matt. xii. 39. 41, xvi. 4, and Luke xi. 29), it is evident that this book is a true narrative of a real person, and that Jonah was a prophet of considerable eminence.

IV. The Book of Jonah consists of two parts, viz.

1. His first mission to Nineveh, and his attempt to flee to Tarshish, and its frustration, together with his delivery from the stomach of the great fish which had swallowed him (ch. i. ii).
2. His second mission, and its happy result to the Ninevites, who, in consequence of the prophet's preaching, repented in dust and ashes (iii); and the discontent of Jonah, who, dreading to be thought a false prophet, repined at the divine mercy in sparing the Ninevites, whose destruction he seems to have expected (iv). No reproof can be more gentle than that given by God to the murmuring prophet (10, 11), or present a more endearing picture of Him "whose tender mercies are over all his works."

* See Grotius de Veritate, lib. i. c. 16. *in notis*. Huet, Demonstr. Evangelica, prop. iv. vol. i. p. 433, 8vo edit. Bocharti Opera, tom. iii. p. 742. *et seq.* Pfeiffer in Difficiliora Loca Scripturæ, Centuria 4. Locus lxxvi. (Opp. tom. i. pp. 447, 448.

SECTION II.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET AMOS.

- I. *Author*;—II. *Occasion of his Prophecy*;—III. *Its Scope*;—
IV. *Synopsis of its Contents*;—V. *Observations on its Style*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 810—785.

I. **AMOS**, is the third of the minor prophets, according to the order adopted in our modern Bibles: he is supposed to have been a native of Tekoah, a small town in the kingdom of Judah, situate about four leagues to the south of Jerusalem. There is however no proof of his being a native of this place, except his retiring thither when driven from Bethel by Amaziah, the high-priest of Bethel. (Amos vii. 10—13). Calmet thinks he was born in the territories of Israel. We have more certain information of his rank and condition in life; for he himself tells us that he was “no prophet, neither a prophet’s son;” in other words, that he was not educated in the schools of the prophets, but was called to the prophetic office from being a herdsman and a gatherer (or cultivator) of sycamore fruit. That he prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah king of Judah, and of Jeroboam II. the son of Joash, we are not only informed from the first verse of his predictions, but we also have internal evidence of it, from the argument or subject-matter of his book. For the prophet describes the state of the kingdom of Israel, particularly in chap. vi. 12—14, to be precisely such as is described in 2 Kings xiv. 23, *et seq.* We further learn from Amos i. 1, that he began to prophesy in the second year before the earthquake, in the reign of Uzziah; which is, by Josephus and most commentators, referred to that prince’s usurpation of the sacerdotal office when he attempted to offer incense. Consequently Amos was contemporary with Hosea (though he is supposed not to have lived so long as the last-mentioned prophet), with Jonah, and probably also with Joel.

II. The occasion, on which Amos delivered his predictions, was the oppression of the Jews and Israelites by the neighbouring nations, and the prosperous state of the two kingdoms under Uzziah and Jeroboam II. (Amos i. compared with 2 Kings xiv. 25—27, and 2 Chron. xxvi. 6—15). But as the inhabitants of those kingdoms, especially the Israelites, abandoned themselves to idolatry, effeminacy, avarice, and cruelty

to the poor, contrary to the divine command, the prophet takes occasion thence, to reprove them with the utmost severity for their wickedness.

III. The scope of the book is, to certify to the twelve tribes the destruction of the neighbouring nations; to alarm those who "were at large in Zion," living in a state of carnal security, by the denunciation of imminent punishment; to lead them to repentance; and to cheer those who were truly penitent with the promise of deliverance from future captivity, and of the greater prosperity of the Messiah's kingdom, of which we have a particular prediction in ch. ix. 11.

IV. The book of Amos contains nine chapters or discourses, of which Calmet thinks that the seventh is first in order of time: it may be divided into four parts, viz.

PART 1. *The judgments of God denounced against the neighbouring Gentile nations*; as the Syrians (ch. i. 1—5), which see fulfilled in 2 Kings xvi. 9; the Philistines (i. 6—8), recorded as accomplished in 2 Kings xviii. 8, Jer. xlvii. 1. 5, and 2 Chron. xxvi. 6; the Tyrians (i. 9, 10); the Edomites (i. 11, 12, compared with Jer. xxv. 9. 21. xxvii. 3. 6. and 1 Macc. v. 3; the Ammonites (13—15); and the Moabites (ii. 1—3).

PART 2. *The divine judgments denounced against Judah and Israel* (ii. 4—ix. 1—10); and herein we have,

SECTION 1. The divine judgments against Judah (ii. 4, 5), which were literally executed about two hundred years afterwards;

SECTION 2. against Israel, to whom the prophet's mission was chiefly directed, and to whom we have four distinct sermons delivered by him, viz.

DISCOURSE I. A general reproof and aggravation of their various sins against God (ii. 6—16).

DISCOURSE II. A denunciation of the divine judgments, with a particular enumeration of their several causes (iii).

DISCOURSE III. A reproof of the Israelites for their luxury and oppression (iv).

DISCOURSE IV. A lamentation over the house of Israel, with an earnest exhortation to them to repent, and to seek the Lord; and to abandon their idolatry, luxurious ease, and sinful alliances with their idolatrous neighbours (v. vi). In ch. v. 6. the carrying of the Israelites into captivity beyond Damascus into Assyria is explicitly announced: see its fulfilment in 2 Kings xv. 29, and xvii. 5—23.

The certainty, nearness, and severity of the judgments

thus denounced are confirmed by several prophetic visions, contained in chapters vii. viii. * and ix. 1—10.

PART 3. Consolatory or evangelical promises, describing the restoration of the church by the Messiah, first, under the type of raising up the fallen tabernacle of David (ix. 11, 12); and, secondly, announcing magnificent temporal blessings, viz. great abundance, return from captivity, and re-establishment in their own land, all of which were prophetic of the blessings to be bestowed under the reign of Messiah (ix. 13—15).

V. Jerome calls Amos “rude in speech, but not in knowledge †,” applying to him what Saint Paul modestly professes of himself (2 Cor. xi. 6).

Calmet and many others have followed the authority of Jerome, in speaking of this prophet, as if he were indeed quite rude, ineloquent, and destitute of all the embellishments of composition. The matter, however, as Bishop Lowth has remarked, is far otherwise: “Let any person, who has candour and perspicuity enough to judge, not from the man, but from his writings, open the volume of his predictions, and he will, I think, agree that our shepherd ‘is not a whit behind the very chief of the prophets’ (2 Cor. xi. 5). He will agree, that as, in sublimity and magnificence, he is almost equal to the greatest, so, in splendour of diction, and elegance of expression, he is scarcely inferior to any. The same celestial Spirit, indeed, actuated Isaiah and Daniel in the court, and Amos in the sheep-folds; constantly selecting such interpreters of the divine will as were best adapted to the occasion, and sometimes ‘from the mouth of babes and sucklings perfecting praise’—constantly employing the natural eloquence of some, and occasionally making others eloquent ‡.” Many of the most elegant images employed by Amos are drawn from objects in rural life, with which he was, from his avocations, most intimately conversant.

* An eminent commentator is of opinion that the prophet Amos, in viii. 9, 10. foretells that, during their solemn festivals, the sun should be darkened by an eclipse, which in those days was accounted *ominous*, and should turn their joy into mourning. According to Archbishop Usher (A. M. 3213), about eleven years after Amos prophesied, there were two great eclipses of the sun, one at the feast of tabernacles, the other at the time of the passover. This prophecy, therefore, may be considered as one of those numerous predictions, which we have already shown (pp. 225—230 of this volume) have a double meaning, and apply to more than one event. See Lowth’s Commentary on the Prophets, p. 453. 4th edit.

† Hieronymi Proœm. Comment. in Amos.

‡ Bishop Lowth’s Lectures, vol. ii. lect. xxi. p. 98.

SECTION III.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET HOSEA.

- I. *Author and date*; — II. *Occasion and scope of the Prophecy*; —
 III. *Synopsis of its contents*; — IV. *Observations on its style*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 810—725.

I. CONCERNING the family of Hosea, we have no certain information, except what is furnished to us by the first verse of his prophecy, which states that he was the son of Beerī, whom some Jewish commentators confound with Beerah, a prince of the Reubenites, who was carried into captivity with the ten tribes, by Tiglath-pilezer king of Assyria. He prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, and Ahaz, and in the third year of Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the reign of Jeroboam II. king of Israel; and it is most probable that he was an Israelite, and lived in the kingdom of Samaria or of the ten tribes, as his predictions are chiefly directed against their wickedness and idolatry. But, with the severest denunciations of vengeance, he blends promises of mercy; and the transitions from the one to the other are frequently sudden and unexpected. Rosenmüller and Jahn, after Calmet, are of opinion that the title of this book is a subsequent addition, and that Hosea did not prophesy longer than from forty to sixty years, and that he died, or at least wrote his predictions, before the year 725 before the Christian æra. His writings unquestionably were, originally, in a metrical form, although that arrangement is now, perhaps, irrecoverably lost.

II. The ten tribes (whom this prophet often collectively terms Ephraim, Israel, and Samaria) having revolted from Rehoboam the son of Solomon to Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who set up the two idol calves at Dan and Bethel, consequently deprived themselves of the pure worship of Jehovah at Jerusalem, and speedily fell into the grossest idolatry. Jeroboam II. the son of Joash, was equally wicked with the first sovereign of that name; and the Israelites were but too prone to follow the bad examples of their wicked kings, especially if their affairs were prosperous, as we learn those of Jeroboam II. were. (Compare 2 Kings xiv. 25—27). In his days, therefore, Jehovah raised up the prophet Hosea, to convince them of their apostacy, and recover them to the worship of the

true God. Bishop Horsley, however, is of opinion that Hosea's principal subject is that, which is the principal subject of all the prophets, viz. "the guilt of the Jewish nation in general, their disobedient refractory spirit, the heavy judgments that awaited them, their final conversion to God, their re-establishment in the land of promise, and their restoration to God's favour, and to a condition of the greatest national prosperity, and of high pre-eminence among the nations of the earth, under the immediate protection of the Messiah, in the latter ages of the world. He confines himself more closely to this single subject, than any other prophet. He seems, indeed, of all the prophets, if I may so express my conception of his peculiar character, to have been the most of a Jew. Comparatively, he seems to care but little about other people. He wanders not like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, into the collateral history of the surrounding heathen nations. He meddles not, like Daniel, with the revolutions of the great empires of the world. His own country seems to engross his whole attention; her privileges, her crimes, her punishment, her pardon. He predicts, indeed, in the strongest and clearest terms, the ingrafting of the Gentiles into the church of God. But he mentions it only generally; he enters not, like Isaiah, into a minute detail of the progress of the business. Nor does he describe, in any detail, the previous contest with the apostate faction in the latter ages. He makes no explicit mention of the share, which the converted Gentiles are to have in the re-establishment of the natural Israel in their antient seats; subjects which make so striking a part of the prophecies of Isaiah, Daniel, Zachariah, Haggai, and, occasionally, of the other prophets. He alludes to the calling of our Lord from Egypt; to the resurrection on the third day; he touches, but only in general terms, upon the final overthrow of the Antichristian army in Palestine, by the immediate interposition of Jehovah; and he celebrates, in the loftiest strains of triumph and exultation, the Saviour's final victory over death and hell. But yet, of all the prophets, he certainly enters the least into the detail of the mysteries of redemption. We have nothing in him descriptive of the events of the interval between the two advents of our Lord. Nothing diffuse and circumstantial, upon the great and interesting mysteries of the incarnation, and the atonement. His country, and his kindred, is the subject next his heart. Their crimes excite his indignation; their sufferings interest his pity; their future exaltation is the object, on which his imagination

fixes with delight. It is a remarkable dispensation of Providence, that clear notices, though in general terms, of the universal redemption, should be found in a writer so strongly possessed with national partialities. This Judaism seems to make the particular character of Hosea as a prophet. Not that the ten tribes are exclusively his subject. His country is indeed his particular and constant subject; but his country generally, in both its branches, not in either taken by itself." *

According to this view of the subject, the general argument of Hosea's prophecy "appears to be the fortunes of the whole Jewish nation in its two great branches; not the particular concerns (and least of all the particular temporal concerns) of either branch exclusively. And to this grand opening the whole sequel of the prophecy corresponds. In setting forth the vices of the people, the picture is chiefly taken, as might naturally be expected, from the manners of the prophet's own times; in part of which the corruption, in either kingdom, was at the greatest height: after the death of Jeroboam, in the kingdom of Israel; in the reign of Ahaz, in the kingdom of Judah. And there is occasionally much allusion, sometimes predictive allusion, to the principal events of the prophet's times. And much more to the events in the kingdom of Israel, than to those in Judah. Perhaps, because the danger being more immediately imminent in the former kingdom, the state of things in that was more alarming, and the occurrences, for that reason, more interesting. Still the history of his own times in detail, in either kingdom, is not the prophet's subject. It furnishes similes and allusions, but it makes no considerable part, indeed it makes no part at all, of the action (if I may so call it) of the poem. The action lies in events beyond the prophet's times; the commencement indeed within them; but the termination, in times yet future; and, although we may hope the contrary, for aught we know with certainty, remote. The deposition of Jehu's family, by the murder of Zedekiah, the son and successor of Jeroboam, was the commencement; the termination will be the restoration of the whole Jewish nation under one head, in the latter days, in the great day of Jezräel; and the intermediate parts of the action are the judgments, which were to fall, and accordingly have fallen, upon the two distinct kingdoms of Israel and Judah, typified by Lo-ruhamah and Lo-ammi." †

* Bishop Horsley's *Hosea*, Preface, pp. vii. viii.

† *Ibid.* p. xxvi.

The scope of this prophet's predictions is, 1. Partly to detect, reprove, and convince the Jewish nation generally, and the Israelites in particular, of their many and heinous sins, especially of their gross idolatry; the corrupt state of the kingdom is also incidentally noticed;—2. Partly to denounce the imminent and utter rejection, final captivity, and destruction of the Israelites by the Assyrians (if the former persisted in their wicked career), notwithstanding all their vain confidence in the assistance to be afforded them by Egypt; and, 3. Partly to invite them to repentance with promises of mercy, and evangelical predictions of the future restoration of the Israelites and Jews, and their ultimate conversion to Christianity.

III. The prophecy of Hosea contains fourteen chapters, which may be divided into five sections or discourses, exclusive of the title in ch. i. 1. viz.

DISCOURSE 1. Under the figure of the supposed * infidelity of the prophet's wife is represented the spiritual infidelity of the Israelites, a remnant of whom, it is promised, shall be saved (i. 2—11), and they are exhorted to forsake idolatry (ii. 1—11). Promises are then introduced, on the general conversion of the *twelve* tribes to Christianity; and the gracious purposes of Jehovah towards the *ten* tribes, or the kingdom of Israel in particular, are represented under the figure of the prophet taking back his wife on her amendment (ii. 11—23. iii).

DISCOURSE 2. The prophet, in direct terms, inveighs against the bloodshed and idolatry of the Israelites (iv. 1—14. 17—19), against which the inhabitants of Judah are exhorted to take warning (15, 16). In chap. v. 1—14, the divine judgments are denounced against the priests, the people, and the princes of Israel, to whom are held out promises of pardon in v. 15, which are continued through verses 1—3. of chap. vi. The metaphors used by the prophet on this occasion are remarkably strong and beautiful. The resurrection, the morning, and the refreshing showers, in their season, supply them; in a more immediate sense they denote a speedy and gracious deliverance, but in a remote sense they refer to the resurrection of

* Bishop Horsley contends at great length, contrary to most interpreters, that the prophet's marriage was a real transaction, and a type of the whole Jewish nation, distinct parts of which were typified by the three children, Jezräel, Lo-ruhamah, and Lo-ammi. See the Preface to his version of Hosea, pp. viii—xxv.

Christ (compare Hosea vi. 2. with 1 Cor. xv. 4.) and the blessings of the Gospel.

DISCOURSE 3. The prophet's exhortations to repentance proving ineffectual, God complains by him of their obstinate iniquity and idolatry (vi. 4—11. vii. 1—10), and denounces that Israel will be carried into captivity into Assyria by Sennacherib, notwithstanding their reliance on Egypt for assistance (vii. 11—16. viii).

DISCOURSE 4. The captivity and dispersion of Israel is further threatened (ix. x.); the Israelites are reprov'd for their idolatry, yet they shall not be utterly destroyed, and their return to their own country is foretold (xi)*. Renewed denunciations are made on account of their idolatry (xii. xiii. 1—8).

DISCOURSE 5. After a terrible denunciation of divine punishment, intermixed with promises of restoration from captivity (xiii. 9—16), the prophet exhorts the Israelites to repentance, and furnishes them with a beautiful form of prayer adapted to their situation (xiv. 1—3); and foretells their reformation from idolatry, together with the subsequent restoration of *all* the tribes from their dispersed state, and their conversion to the Gospel (4—9).

IV. The style of Hosea, Bishop Lowth remarks, exhibits the appearance of very remote antiquity; it is pointed, energetic, and concise. It bears a distinguished mark of poetical composition, in that pristine brevity and condensation which is observable in the sentences, and which later writers have in some measure neglected. This peculiarity has not escaped the observation of Jerome, who remarks that this prophet is altogether laconic and sententious†. “But this very circumstance, which antiently was supposed to impart uncommon force and elegance, in the present state of Hebrew literature is productive of so much obscurity, that, although the general subject of this writer is sufficiently obvious, he is the most difficult and perplexed of all the prophets. There is, however, another reason for the obscurity of his style. Hosea,

* The prediction in Hosea xi. 10, 11, respecting the return of the Israelites to their own country, was partly fulfilled in consequence of Cyrus's decree (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23. Ezra i. 1—4); but, in its fullest extent, it remains to be accomplished in the future restoration of the Jews to their own land. This is one instance, among many, in which the language of the prophets is adapted to two or more events. We have the authority of an inspired writer to extend this remark to another part of the same chapter. (Compare xi. 1. with Matt. ii. 15). Smith's Summary View of the Prophets, p. 177.

† Præf. in xii. Proph.

we have seen, prophesied during the reigns of the four kings of Judah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah: the duration of his ministry, therefore, in whatever manner we calculate it, must include a very considerable space of time. We have now only a small volume of his remaining, which, it seems, contains his principal prophecies; and these are extant in a continued series, with no marks of distinction as to the times when they were published, or of which they treat. It is, therefore, no wonder, if, in perusing the prophecies of Hosea, we sometimes find ourselves in a similar predicament with those who consulted the scattered leaves of the Sibyl." *

* Lowth's *Prælect.* xxi. Bishop Horsley differs in opinion from Bishop Lowth, as to the cause of the obscurity which is observable in the prophecies of Hosea. Bishop Horsley ascribes it, not to the great antiquity of the composition, nor to any thing peculiar to the language of the author's age, but to his peculiar idioms, frequent changes of person, his use of the nominative case absolute, his anomalies of number and gender, the ambiguity of pronouns, and corrupt readings, &c. See the Preface to his version of Hosea, pp. xxix—xliii.

SECTION IV.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

I. *Author and date*; — II. *Scope*; — III. *Analysis of the contents of this book*; — IV. *Observations on its style.*

BEFORE CHRIST, 810—698.

I. THOUGH fifth in the order of time, the writings of the prophet Isaiah are placed first in order of the prophetic books, principally on account of the sublimity and importance of his predictions, and partly also because the book, which bears his name, is larger than all the twelve minor prophets put together.

Concerning his family and descent, nothing certain has been recorded, except what he himself tells us (i. 1), viz. that he was the son of Amoz, and discharged the prophetic office "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah," who successively flourished between A. M. 3194 and 3305. There is a current tradition that he was of the blood-royal; and some writers have affirmed that his father Amoz or Amos was the son of Joash, and consequently brother of Uzziah king of Judah. Jerome, on the authority of

some rabbinical writers, says, that the prophet gave his daughter in marriage to Manasseh king of Judah; but this opinion is scarcely credible, because Manasseh did not commence his reign until about sixty years after Isaiah had begun to discharge his prophetic functions. He must, indeed, have exercised the office of a prophet during a long period of time, if he lived to the reign of Manasseh; for the lowest computation, beginning from the year in which Uzziah died, when he is by some supposed to have received his first appointment to that office, brings it to sixty-one years. But the tradition of the Jews, which has been adopted by most Christian commentators, that he was put to death by Manasseh, is very uncertain; and Aben Ezra, one of the most celebrated Jewish writers, is rather of opinion that he died before Hezekiah; which Bishop Lowth thinks most probable. It is, however, certain, that he lived at least to the fifteenth or sixteenth year of Hezekiah; which makes the least possible term of the duration of his prophetic office to be about forty-eight years.

The name of Isaiah, as Vitranga has remarked after several preceding commentators, is in some measure descriptive of his high character, since it signifies the *salvation-of-Jehovah*; and was given with singular propriety to him, who foretold the advent of the Messiah, through “whom all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” (Compare Isa. xl. 5. with Luke iii. 6. and Acts iv. 12). Isaiah was contemporary with the prophets Amos, Hosea, Joel, and Micah.

Isaiah is uniformly spoken of in the Scriptures as a prophet of the highest dignity; Bishop Lowth calls him the prince of all the prophets, and pronounces the whole of his book to be poetical, with the exception of a few detached passages. It is remarkable, that his wife is styled a “prophetess” in viii. 3, whence the rabbinical writers have concluded that she possessed the spirit of prophecy: but it is very probable that the prophets’ wives were called prophetesses, as the priests’ wives were termed priestesses, only from the quality of their husbands. Although nothing further is recorded in the Scriptures concerning the wife of Isaiah, we find two of his sons mentioned in his prophecy, who “were types or figurative pledges of God’s assurance; and their names and actions were intended to awaken a religious attention in the persons whom they were commissioned to address, and to instruct*.” Thus,

* Gray’s Key, p. 365.

Shear-jashub (vii. 3.) signifies, “*a remnant shall return*,” and showed that the captives who should be carried to Babylon, should return thence after a certain time; and Maher-shalal-hash-baz (viii. 1. 3), which denotes “*make speed (or, run swiftly) to the spoil*,” implied that the kingdoms of Israel and Syria would in a short time be ravaged.

Besides the volume of prophecies, which we are now to consider, it appears from 1 Chron. xxvi. 22. that Isaiah wrote an account of “the Acts of Uzziah” king of Judah: “this has perished with some other writings of the prophets, which, as probably not written by inspiration, were never admitted into the canon of Scripture*.” There are also two apocryphal books ascribed to him, viz. “*The Ascension of Isaiah*,” and “*The Apocalypse of Isaiah*,” but these are evidently forgeries of a later date, and have long since perished.†

II. The scope of Isaiah’s predictions is three-fold, viz.

1. *To detect, reprove, aggravate, and condemn the sins of the Jewish people especially, and also the iniquities of the ten tribes of Israel, and the abominations of many Gentile nations and countries; denouncing the severest judgments against all sorts and degrees of persons, whether Jews or Gentiles.*

2. *To invite persons of every rank and condition, both Jews and Gentiles, to repentance and reformation, by numerous promises of pardon and mercy. It is worthy of remark, that no such promises are intermingled with the denunciations of divine vengeance against Babylon, although they occur in the threatenings against every other people.*

3. *To comfort all the truly pious (in the midst of all the calamities and judgments denounced against the wicked) with prophetic promises of the true Messiah, “which seem almost to anticipate the Gospel history, so clearly do they foreshow the divine character of Christ (ch. vii. 14. compared with Matt. i. 18—23. and Luke i. 27—35; vi. ix. 6. xxxv. 4. xl. 5. 9. 10. xlii. 6—8. lxi. 1. compared with Luke iv. 18. lxii. 11. lxiii. 1—4); his miracles (ch. xxxv. 5, 6); his peculiar qualities and virtues (ch. xi. 2, 3. xl. 11. xliii. 1—3); his rejection (ch. vi. 9—12. compared with Mark xiii. 14; vii. 14, 15. liii. 3),*

* Dr. Gray’s Key, p. 372.

† *Ascensio enim Isaie et Apocalypsis Isaie hoc habent testimonium. Jerom. Comment. on Isaiah, c. lxiv. (Op. tom. iii. p. 473). See also tom. iv. p. 344. The anabaticon or ascension of Isaiah is mentioned by Epiphanius, among the books received by Hierax, founder of the sect of the Hieracites, in the fourth century. Hæres. 67. Dr. Lardner’s Works, vol. iii. p. 402.*

and sufferings for our sins (ch. l. 6. liii. 4—11) *; his death, burial (ch. liii. 8, 9), and victory over death (ch. xxv. 8. liii. 10. 12); and, lastly, his final glory (ch. xlix. 7. 22, 23. lii. 13—15. liii. 4, 5), and the establishment, increase (ch. ii. 2—4. ix. 7. xlii. 4. xlvi. 13), and perfection (ch. ix. 2. 7. xi. 4—10. xvi. 5. xxix. 18—24. xxxii. 1. xl. 4, 5. xlix. 9—13. li. 3—6. lii. 6—10. lv. 1—3. lix. 16—21. lx. lxi. 1—5. lxv. 25), of his kingdom; each specifically pointed out, and pourtrayed with the most striking and discriminating characters. It is impossible, indeed, to reflect on these, and on the whole chain of his illustrious prophecies, and not to be sensible that they furnish the most incontestable evidence in support of Christianity.” †

III. The predictions of Isaiah are contained in sixty-six chapters; of which the five first are generally supposed to have been delivered in the reign of Uzziah; the sixth in the reign of Jotham; the seventh to the fifteenth in the reign of Ahaz; and the remainder in that of Hezekiah. Various modes of classifying them have been proposed, in order to present them in the most useful and lucid arrangement; some commentators and critics dividing them into three parts:—*Evangelico-Legal*, which contain denunciations of the divine vengeance, intermixed with evangelical promises;—2. *Historical*, comprizing the narrative part;—and, 3. *Evangelical*, comprizing prophecies and promises relative to the deliverance of the Jews from captivity, and the yet greater deliverance of mankind from the bondage of sin, by the Messiah. By other writers, the book of the prophet Isaiah is divided into—1. *Reprehensory*, including sharp reproofs and threatenings of the Jews for their sins, in which are mingled promises to the penitent;—2. *Minatory*, containing threatenings against the enemies of the Jewish church, and also against the Jews themselves;—3. *Narrative or Historical*;—and, 4. *Consolatory* and evangelical promises concerning Messiah and the church. Other classifications have been proposed, which it is not necessary to specify; but, without adopting any of them, we apprehend that the following synopsis will be found to exhibit a clear view of the various topics discussed by the royal prophet. The predictions

* The Ethiopian eunuch appears to have been made a proselyte by Saint Philip's explanation of this chapter. Vid. Acts viii. 32. The whole of it is so minutely descriptive of Christ's passion, that a famous Rabbi, likewise, on reading it, was converted from Judaism.—Who, indeed, can resist its evidence?

† Dr. Gray's Key, pp. 369, 370.

of Isaiah, then, may be divided into six sections, each containing a number of discourses, delivered by the prophet to the various nations or people whom he was commissioned to address. *

SECTION 1. contains a general description of the state and condition of the Jews, in the several periods of their history; the promulgation and success of the Gospel, and the coming of Messiah to judgment (ch. i—v.) The predictions in this section were delivered during the reign of Uzziah king of Judah.

DISCOURSE 1. (ch. i. throughout). The prophecy in this first chapter (to which, as well as to the whole book, the first verse forms a general title †), stands single and unconnected, constituting an entire piece of itself. If, as we suppose to have been the case, it was delivered in the reign of Uzziah, the desolation which it describes may refer to the calamities which were occasioned before that time by Jehoash king of Israel (compare 2 Kings xiv. 12—14); or, the prophet may describe scenes yet future, as already passing before his eyes, to denote their certainty. As, however, the portrait, which it presents of the desolate and distressed state of the land of Judah, agrees much better with the wicked and afflicted reign of the apostate Ahaz, than with the flourishing circumstances in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, (who were both, in the main, good princes); on this account the learned Dr. John Taylor thinks it probable that the prediction in this chapter was uttered in the reign of Ahaz, and intends the invasion of Judah by Rezin and Pekah, kings of Syria

* These general divisions of the prophecy are according to the scheme proposed by Vitranga (Comment. in Esaiam, tom. i. p. 24) and Bishop Tomline (Elements of Christ. Theol. vol. i. p. 107). In the various discourses, or prophetic sermons, comprized under each section, we have principally followed Bishop Lowth, in his admirable translation of, and notes upon, the prophet Isaiah.

† Commentators are divided in opinion, whether the title in verse 1. (*the vision of Isaiah*) belongs to the whole book, or only to the prophecy contained in this chapter. The former part of the title seems properly to belong to this particular prophecy; the latter part, which enumerates the kings of Judah under whom Isaiah exercised his prophetic office, seems to extend it to the entire collection of prophecies delivered in the course of his ministry. Vitranga (with whom Bishop Lowth agrees) has solved this doubt very judiciously. He supposes that the former part of the title was originally prefixed to this single prophecy; and that, when the collection of all Isaiah's prophecies was made, the enumeration of the kings of Judah was added, to make it at the same time a proper title to the whole book. As such it is plainly taken in 2 Chron. xxxii. 32. where the book of Isaiah is cited by the title of "The Vision of Isaiah the Prophet, the son of Amots." Vitranga, tom. i. pp. 25—29. Bishop Lowth's Isaiah, vol. ii. p. 4.

and Israel *. But whichever of these conjectures may be preferred, the chapter contains a severe remonstrance against the inclinations to idolatry, want of inward piety, and other corruptions, prevailing among the Jews of that time, intermixed with powerful exhortations to repentance, grievous threatenings to the impenitent, and gracious promises of better times, when the nation shall have been reformed by the just judgments of God. The whole of this discourse affords a beautiful example of the prophet's elegant and impressive manner of writing.

DISCOURSE 2. (ch. ii. iii. iv.) contains the following particulars :

1. The preaching* of the Gospel, and the conversion of the Gentile world (ii. 1—5).
2. A prediction of the punishment of the unbelieving Jews, for their idolatrous practices, for their self-confidence, and distrust in God ; and likewise the destruction of idolatry, in consequence of the establishment of Messiah's kingdom (ii. 6—20).
3. A prophecy of the destruction of the Jews by the Babylonians (and probably also by the Romans), with a particular amplification of the distress of the proud and luxurious daughters of Sion (iii. 1—26. iv. 1).
4. A promise, to the remnant that should escape these severe trials, of a restoration to the favour and protection of God (iv. 2—6).

This prophetic sermon was probably delivered in the time of Jotham, or perhaps in the reign of Uzziah.

DISCOURSE 3. (ch. v.) This chapter likewise is unconnected with the preceding or following : its subject is nearly the same with that of ch. i. Like that, it contains a general reproof of the Jews for their ingratitude, which is beautifully delineated in the parable of the vineyard (verses 1—5); their rejection is foretold, and the Babylonian invasion (perhaps also that of the Romans) is more expressly denounced (verses 6—30).

SECTION 2. comprizes the predictions delivered in the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz (ch. vi—xii.)

* Scheme of Scripture Divinity, chap. xxxiv. in vol. i. of Bishop Watson's Collection of Tracts, pp. 143, 144.

DISCOURSE 1. The vision and prophecy of Isaiah in the reign of Jotham (ch. vi.) * As this chapter seems to contain a solemn designation of Isaiah to the prophetic office, it is supposed by many interpreters to be the first in order of his prophecies. Bishop Lowth, however, conjectures that this may not be the case, because Isaiah is said, in the general title of his predictions, to have prophesied in the time of Uzziah; and is of opinion that it is a new designation, to introduce, with the greater solemnity, a general declaration of the whole course of God's dispensations towards his people, and the fates of the nation—events which are still depending, and will not be fully accomplished until the final restoration of Israel.

DISCOURSE 2. (ch. vii—ix. 6) commences with an historical account of the occasion of the prophecy, and is followed by a prediction (confirmed by a sign) of the ill success that should attend the designs of the Israelites and Syrians against Judah (vii. 1—16); to this succeeds a denunciation of the calamities that were to be brought upon the king and people of Judah by the Assyrians, whom they had hired to assist them (vii. 16—25). These predictions and denunciations are repeated and confirmed in ch. viii. the ninth and tenth verses of which contain a general assurance that all the designs of the enemies of God's people shall ultimately be frustrated; and the discourse concludes, after various admonitions and threatenings (viii. 11—22. ix. 1), with an illustrious prophecy (ix. 2—6), in the first instance perhaps, of the restoration of prosperity under Hezekiah, but principally of the manifestation of the Messiah, the transcendent dignity of his character, and the universality and eternal duration of his kingdom.

DISCOURSE 3. (ch. ix. 7.—x. 4) contains a distinct prophecy and a just poem, remarkable for the regularity of its disposition and the elegance of its plan. It is exclusively addressed to the kingdom of Israel, and its subject is a denunciation of vengeance awaiting their enemies.

DISCOURSE 4. (ch. x. 5.—xii.) foretells the destruction of Sennacherib's army (x. 5—34. xi.); and, according to Isaiah's usual method, he takes occasion, from the mention of a great temporal deliverance by the destruction of the

* For a particular elucidation of this sublime vision, see Bishop Lowth's *Isaiah*, vol. ii. pp. 72—77, and Dr. Hales's *Analysis of Chronology*, vol. ii. book i. pp. 436, *et seq.*

Assyrian host, to launch forth into a display of the spiritual deliverance of God's people by the Messiah, to whom this prophecy relates. (Compare Rom. xv. 12). The hymn in ch. xii. seems, by its whole tenor as well as by many of its expressions, much better calculated for the use of the Christian than for the Jewish church under any circumstances, or at any time that can be assigned; and the Jews themselves seem to have applied it to the times of the Messiah.

SECTION 3. contains various predictions against the Babylonians, Assyrians, Philistines, and other nations with whom the Jews had any intercourse (ch. xiii—xxiv); these predictions are contained in nine prophetic poems or discourses.

DISCOURSE 1. (ch. xiii—xiv. 1—28) foretells the destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians; it was probably delivered in the reign of Ahaz, about two hundred years before its accomplishment. The captivity itself of the Jews at Babylon (which the prophet does not expressly foretell, but supposes in the spirit of prophecy as what was actually to be effected) did not take place till about one hundred and thirty years after this prediction was delivered. And the Medes, who (in xiii. 7) are mentioned as the principal agents in subverting this great monarchy, and releasing the Jews from their captivity, were at this time an inconsiderable people, forming only a province of the Assyrian empire. The former part of this prophecy, Bishop Lowth remarks, is one of the most beautiful examples that can be given of elegance of composition, variety of imagery, and sublimity of sentiment and diction in the prophetic style; and the latter part consists of a triumphal ode, which, for beauty of disposition, strength of colour, grandeur of sentiment, brevity, perspicuity, and force of expression, stands unrivalled among all the monuments of antiquity. How punctually this prophecy was fulfilled, we may read in Dan. v.; and the successive testimonies of all travellers, to the present time, unanimously concur in stating Babylon to be utterly annihilated, so that even the place, where this wonder of the world once stood, cannot now be determined with any certainty.

DISCOURSE 2. (ch. xiv. 28—32) contains severe prophetic denunciations against the Philistines, the accomplishment of which is recorded in 2 Kings xviii. 8.

DISCOURSE 3. (ch. xv. xvi.) is a prophecy against the Moabites: it was probably delivered in the first year of

Hezekiah, and was fulfilled in the fourth year of his reign, when Shalmanezzer invaded the kingdom of Israel.

DISCOURSE 4. (ch. xvii.) is a prophecy chiefly directed against Damascus or the kingdom of Syria, with whose sovereign the king of Samaria (or Israel) had confederated against Jerusalem. Bishop Lowth conjectures that it was delivered, soon after the prophecies of the seventh and eighth chapters, in the commencement of Ahab's reign. It was fulfilled by Tiglath-pilezer's taking Damascus, (2 Kings xvi. 9), overrunning a very considerable part of the kingdom of Israel, and carrying a great number of the Israelites captives into Assyria; and in regard to Israel, this prediction was still more fully accomplished by the conquest of the kingdom, and the captivity of the people, effected a few years after by Shalmanezzer. The three last verses of this chapter are a distinct prophecy, and contain a noble description of the formidable invasion and sudden overthrow of Sennacherib, which is intimated in the strongest terms and most expressive images, exactly suitable to the event.

DISCOURSE 5. (ch. xviii.) contains an obscure prophecy. Vitranga considers it as directed against the Assyrians; Bishop Lowth refers it to the Egyptians; and Rosenmüller, and others, to the Ethiopians.

DISCOURSE 6. (ch. xix. xx.) is a prophecy against Egypt, the conversion of whose inhabitants to the true religion is intimated in verses 18—25. of ch. xviii.

DISCOURSE 7. (ch. xxi. 1—10) contains a second prophecy against Babylon*, which was fulfilled in the capture of that city by the Medes and Persians. The eleventh and twelfth verses of this chapter are very obscure; they relate to Edom or Seir; and the five last verses contain a prophecy respecting Arabia, that was fulfilled within a year after its delivery.

DISCOURSE 8. (ch. xxii.) is a prophecy concerning the capture of Jerusalem (verses 1—14), the captivity of Shebna (15—19), and the promotion of Eliakim (20—22.) The invasion of Jerusalem here announced is either that by the Assyrians under Sennacherib; or by the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar. Vitranga is of opinion that the prophet had *both* in view; viz. the invasion of the Chal-

* Bishop Newton has collected and illustrated the various predictions of Isaiah and other prophets against Babylon. See his Dissertation on the Prophecies, vol. i. diss. ix.

deans in verses 1—5, and that of the Assyrians in verses 8—11. Compare 2 Kings xxv. 4, 5. and 2 Chron. xxxii. 2—5.

DISCOURSE 9. (ch. xxiii.) foretells the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar * (1—17). The eighteenth verse is supposed to predict the conversion of the Tyrians to Christianity. Compare Acts xxi. 4.

SECTION 4. contains a prophecy of the great calamities that should befall the people of God, His merciful preservation of a remnant of them, and of their restoration to their country, of their conversion to the Gospel, and the destruction of Antichrist (ch. xxiv—xxxiii.)

DISCOURSE 1. (ch. xxiv. xxv. xxvi.) was probably delivered in the beginning of Hezekiah's reign; but interpreters are not agreed whether the desolation announced in ch. xxiv. was that caused by the invasion of Shalmanezar, by Nebuchadnezzar, or by the Romans. Vitranga is singular in referring it to the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes; and Bishop Lowth thinks it may have a view to all the three great desolations of the country, especially to the destruction of the city and nation by the Romans. In verse 22. God promises to visit his people; and the glance at their future restoration in the close of this chapter leads the prophet to break out into a sublime and beautiful song of praise, dictated more by the prospect of future mercies than by the recollection of past events (xxv.); this is followed by another hymn in ch. xxvi. in which thanksgivings for temporal and spiritual mercies are beautifully mingled, though the latter still predominate. In verse 19. the sublime and evangelical doctrine is hinted at, and made to typify the deliverance of the people of God from a state of the lowest misery.

DISCOURSE 2. (ch. xxvii.) treats on the nature, measure, and design of God's dealings with his people.

DISCOURSE 3. (ch. xxviii.) contains a prophecy directed both to the Israelites and to the Jews. The destruction of the former by Shalmanezar is manifestly denounced in verses 1—5; and the prophecy then turns to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, the remnant of God's people, who were to continue a kingdom after the final captivity of the Israelites. It commences with a favourable prognostica-

* On the accomplishment of the various prophecies against Tyre, see Bishop Newton's Dissertations, vol. i. diss. xi.

tion of their affairs under Hezekiah ; but soon changes to reproofs and threatenings for their disobedience and profaneness.

DISCOURSE 4. (ch. xxix—xxxiii.) predicts the invasion of Sennacherib, and the great distress of the Jews while it continued (xxix. 1—4); the sudden destruction of the Assyrian army (5—8). The Jews are next threatened for placing the chief of their religion in outward rites, and not in inward and true piety (9—17). Prosperity is then promised during the latter part of Hezekiah's reign; interspersed are reproofs and threatenings, and promises of better times (18—33. xxx—xxxiii. 17). The whole concludes (xxxiii. 18—24), in the person of the prophet, with a description of the security of the Jews under the divine protection, and of the wretched state of Sennacherib and his army, totally discomfited, and exposed to be plundered even by the weakest of the enemy.

DISCOURSE 5. (ch. xxxiv. xxxv.) comprizes one distinct prophecy, forming an entire, regular, and beautiful poem, consisting of two parts. The first contains a denunciation of the divine vengeance against the people or church of God: and the second part describes the flourishing state of Christ's church, consequent on the execution of those judgments. It is plain from every part of it, that this chapter is to be understood of Gospel times. The fifth and sixth verses were literally accomplished in Jesus Christ (Matt. xi. 4, 5). In a secondary sense, Bishop Lowth remarks, they may have a further view; and, running parallel with the former part of the prophecy, may relate to the future advent of Christ, to the conversion of the Jews, and their restoration to their own land; and to the extension and purification of the Christian faith;—events predicted in the Holy Scriptures as preparatory to it.

SECTION 5. comprizes the historical part of the prophecy of Isaiah. Ch. xxxvi. relates the history of Sennacherib's invasion, and the destruction of his army, as a proper introduction to ch. xxxvii. which contains the answer of God to Hezekiah's prayer, that could not otherwise be understood without it. The narration in chapters xxxviii. and xxxix. appears, in some parts, to be an abridgment of 2 Kings xx.

SECTION 6. (ch. xl—lxvi.) comprizes a series of prophecies, delivered, in all probability, towards the close of Hezekiah's reign. This portion of Isaiah's predictions constitutes the most elegant part of the sacred writings of the Old Testament.

The chief subject is the restoration of the church. This is pursued with the greatest regularity; containing the deliverance of the Jews from captivity—the vanity and destruction of idols—the vindication of the divine power and truth—consolations and invitations to the Jews—denunciations against them for their infidelity and impiety—their rejection, and the calling of the Gentiles—the happiness of the righteous, and the final destruction of the wicked. But, as the subject of this very beautiful series of prophecies is chiefly of the consolatory kind, they are introduced with a promise of the restoration of the kingdom, and the return from the Babylonian captivity, through the merciful interposition of God. At the same time, this redemption from Babylon is employed as an image to shadow out a redemption of an infinitely higher and more important nature. The prophet connects these two events together, scarcely ever treating of the former without throwing in some intimations of the latter; and sometimes he is so fully possessed with the glories of the future more remote kingdom of the Messiah, that he seems to leave the immediate subject of his commission almost out of the question. This section consists of twelve prophetic poems or discourses.

DISCOURSE 1. (ch. xl. xli.) contains a promise of comfort to the people of God, interspersed with declarations of the omnipotence and omniscience of Jehovah, and a prediction of the restoration of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity by Cyrus.

DISCOURSE 2. The advent of the Messiah, and the character and blessings of his kingdom, are foretold (xlii. 1—17); for rejecting which the infidelity and blindness of the Jews are reprov'd (18—25). A remnant of them, however, it is promised, shall be preserved, and ultimately restored to their own land (xliii. 1—13). The taking of Babylon by Cyrus, and the restoration of the Jews, are again foretold, as also (perhaps) their return after the Roman dispersion (14—20); and they are admonished to repent of those sins which would otherwise bring the severest judgments of God upon them (22—28).

DISCOURSE 3. contains promises of redemption, and of the effusion of the Holy Spirit, intermingled with a beautiful and forcible exposure of the folly of idolatry (xliv. 1—20). Thence, the prophet announces by name their future deliverer, Cyrus (21—28. xlv. 1—5); and, according to his usual manner, he makes a transition to the greater work of God in the conversion of the Gentiles to the Gospel,

and the ultimate triumph of the latter over Antichrist (6—25).

DISCOURSE 4. foretells the carrying away of the idols of Babylon (xlvi. 1—5); the folly of worshipping them is then strikingly contrasted with the attributes and perfections of Jehovah (6—13); and the destruction of Babylon is further denounced (xlvii).

DISCOURSE 5. contains an earnest reproof of the Jews for their obstinate attachment to idolatry, which would infallibly involve them in the severest calamities (xlviii. 1—19. 21, 22); and foretells their deliverance from the Babylonian captivity (20).

DISCOURSE 6. introduces the Messiah in person, declaring the full extent of his commission, foretelling the unbelief and rejection of the Jews, the triumphant state of the church, and particularly of the Jews on their conversion to the Gospel (xlix).

DISCOURSE 7. predicts the rejection of the Jews for their rejection of Jesus Christ (l. 1—3), whose sufferings and exaltation are foretold (4—11). Still keeping the Great Deliverer in view, the prophet exhorts the faithful Jews to trust in him, and foretells their future restoration after the Babylonian captivity and the Roman dispersion, as also their conversion to Christianity (li. lii. 1—12).

DISCOURSE 8. predicts the person, offices, humiliation, sufferings, and exaltation of Christ, the end of his death, and the blessings resulting to mankind from that event (lii. 13—15. liii).

DISCOURSE 9. foretells the increase of the church by the conversion of the Jews and Gentiles, and its triumphant state in general (liv).

DISCOURSE 10. describes the fullness, freeness, excellence, and everlasting nature of the blessings of the Gospel, and the conditions on which they are to be attained, without respect to persons or nations (lv. lvi. 1—8).

DISCOURSE 11. contains a prophecy of the calamities that would befall the inhabitants of Judah, in consequence of the sins which they would commit after the death of Hezekiah, particularly their idolatry and hypocrisy; by the captivity of Manasseh and some others, and afterwards of the whole nation, first by the Babylonians, and subsequently by the Romans (lvi. 9—12. lvi—lix. 14).

DISCOURSE 12. chiefly predicts the general conversion of the Jews to the Gospel, the coming in of the fulness of

the Gentiles, and the destruction of Antichrist; also the restoration of the Jews, and the happy state of the Christian church (lix. 15—21. lx—lxvi). In ch. lxi. 1—9. the Messiah is introduced describing his character and office, and confirming the ample promises made in the preceding chapter. The deliverance of the church from all her enemies by the GREAT REDEEMER, and the destruction of Antichrist and his followers, are delineated in ch. lxiii. 1—6, with unequalled pathos, energy, and sublimity. And the two last chapters in the prophecy set forth, in the clearest terms, the calling of the Gentiles, the establishment of the Christian dispensation, and the reprobation of the apostate Jews.

IV. Isaiah has, with singular propriety, been denominated the "*evangelical prophet*," on account of the number and variety of his prophecies concerning the advent and character, the ministry and preaching, the sufferings and death, and the extensive permanent kingdom of the Messiah. His predictions indeed, are so explicit and determinate, as well as so numerous, that no one can be at a loss in applying them to the mission and character of Jesus Christ, and to the events which are cited in his history by the writers of the New Testament. This prophet, says Bishop Lowth, abounds in such transcendent excellencies, that he may be properly said to afford the most perfect model of prophetic poetry. He is at once elegant and sublime, forcible and ornamented; he unites energy with copiousness, and dignity with variety. In his sentiments there is uncommon elevation and majesty; in his imagery the utmost propriety, elegance, dignity, and diversity; in his language uncommon beauty and energy; and, notwithstanding the obscurity of his subjects, a surprising degree of clearness and simplicity. To these we may add, that there is such sweetness in the poetical composition of his sentences, whether it proceed from art or genius, that, if the Hebrew poetry at present is possessed of any remains of its native grace and harmony, we shall chiefly find them in the writings of Isaiah: so that the saying of Ezekiel may most justly be applied to this prophet;

"Thou art the confirmed exemplar of measures,

"Full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty." Ezek. xxviii. 12.

Isaiah also greatly excels in all the graces of method, order, connexion, and arrangement: though in asserting this we must not forget the nature of the prophetic impulse, which bears away the mind with irresistible violence, and frequently in

rapid transitions from near to remote objects, from human to divine: we must likewise be careful in remarking the limits of particular predictions, since, as they are now extant, they are often improperly connected, without any marks of discrimination, which injudicious arrangement, on some occasions, creates almost insuperable difficulties.

Bishop Lowth has selected the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth chapters of this prophet, as a specimen of the poetic style in which he delivers his predictions, and has illustrated at some length the various beauties which eminently distinguish the simple, regular, and perfect poem contained in those chapters. But the grandest specimen of his poetry is presented in the fourteenth chapter, which is one of the most sublime odes occurring in the Bible. and contains the noblest personifications to be found in the records of poetry.

The prophet, after predicting the liberation of the Jews from their severe captivity in Babylon, and their restoration to their own country (verses 1—3), introduces a chorus of them, expressing their surprise and astonishment at the sudden downfall of Babylon, and the great reverse of fortune that had befallen the tyrant, who, like his predecessors, had oppressed his own, and harassed the neighbouring kingdoms. These oppressed kingdoms, or their rulers, are represented under the image of the fir-trees and the cedars of Libanus, frequently used to express any thing in the political or religious world that is supereminently great and majestic: the whole earth shouts for joy; the cedars of Libanus utter a severe taunt over the fallen tyrant, and boast their security now he is no more (verses 4—8).

This is followed (9) by one of the boldest and most animated personifications of Hades, or the regions of the dead, that was ever executed in poetry. Hades excites his inhabitants, the shades of princes, and the departed spirits of monarchs. These illustrious shades rise at once from their couches as from their thrones*; and, advancing to the entrance of

* “The image of the dead,” so admirably described by the prophet, Bishop Lowth observes, “is taken from their custom of burying, those at least of the higher rank, in large sepulchral vaults hewn in the rock. Of this kind of sepulchres there are remains at Jerusalem now extant; and some that are said to be the sepulchres of the kings of Judah. See Maundrell, p. 76. You are to form to yourself an idea of an immense subterraneous vault, a vast gloomy cavern, all round the sides of which there are cells to receive the dead bodies: here the deceased monarchs lie in a distinguished sort of state, suitable to their former rank, each on his own couch, with his arms beside him, his sword at his head, and the bodies of his chiefs and companions round about him. See Ezek. xxxii. 27. On which place Sir John Chardin’s manuscript note is as follows:—

the cavern to meet the king of Babylon, they insult and deride him on being reduced to the same low state of impotence and dissolution with themselves (10, 11). The Jews now resume the speech (12); they address the king of Babylon as the morning-star fallen from heaven, as the first in splendour and dignity in the political world fallen from his high state: they introduce him as uttering the most extravagant vaunts of his power and ambitious designs in his former glory; these are strongly contrasted, in the close, with his present low and abject condition (13—15).

Immediately follows a different scene, and a most happy image, to diversify the same subject, to give it a new turn and additional force. Certain persons are introduced, who light upon the corpse of the king of Babylon, cast out and lying naked upon the bare ground, among the common slain, just after the taking of the city, covered with wounds, and so disfigured, that it is some time before they know him. They accost him with the severest taunts, and bitterly reproach him with his destructive ambition, and his cruel usage of the conquered; which have deservedly brought upon him this ignominious treatment, so different from that which those of his rank usually meet with, and which shall cover his posterity with disgrace (16—20).

To complete the whole, God is introduced, declaring the fate of Babylon, the utter extirpation of the royal family, and the total desolation of the city; the deliverance of his people, and the destruction of their enemies; confirming the irreversible decree by the awful sanction of his oath (21—27).

“How forcible,” says Bishop Lowth, “is this imagery, how diversified, how sublime! how elevated the diction, the figures, the sentiments!—The Jewish nation, the cedars of Lebanon, the ghosts of departed kings, the Babylonish monarch, the travellers who find his corpse, and last of all JEHOVAH himself, are the characters which support this beautiful lyric drama. One continued action is kept up, or rather a series of interesting actions are connected together in an incomparable whole: this, indeed, is the principal and distinguished excellence of the sublimer ode, and is displayed in its utmost perfection in this poem of Isaiah, which may be considered as one of the most antient, and certainly one of the most finished, specimens of that

“En Mingrelie ils dorment tous leur épée sous leurs têtes, & leurs autres armes à leur côté; et on les enterre de mesme, leurs armes posées de cette façon.” Bishop Lowth’s Translation of Isaiah, vol. ii. p. 121.

species of composition which has been transmitted to us. The personifications here are frequent, yet not confused; bold, yet not improbable: a free, elevated, and truly divine spirit pervades the whole; nor is there any thing wanting in this ode to defeat its claim to the character of perfect beauty and sublimity. If, indeed, I may be indulged in the free declaration of my own sentiments on this occasion, I do not know a single instance, in the whole compass of Greek and Roman poetry, which, in every excellence of composition, can be said to equal, or even to approach it." *

* Bishop Lowth's Translation of Isaiah, vol. ii. p. 301, and also his Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, lect. xiii. towards the close. Jahn, Introd. ad Vet. Fœd. p. 367.

SECTION V.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JOEL.

I. *Author and date*; — II. *Occasion and scope*; — III. *Analysis of the book*; — IV. *Observations on its style*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 810—660, or later.

I. CONCERNING the family, condition, and pursuits of this prophet, there is great diversity of opinion among learned men. Although several persons of the name of Joel are mentioned in the Old Testament *, we have no information concerning the prophet himself, except what is contained in the title of his predictions (i. 1) that he was the son of Pethuel. According to some idle reports collected and preserved by the Pseudo-Epiphanius †, he was of the tribe of Reuben, and was born at Bethhoron, a town situate in the confines of the territories of Judah and Benjamin ‡. It is equally uncertain under what sovereign he flourished, or where he died. The celebrated Rabbi Kimchi and others place him in the reign of Joram, and are of opinion that he foretold the seven years' famine which prevailed in that king's reign (2 Kings viii. 1—3). The authors of the two celebrated Jewish Chronicles

* See Simonis Onomasticon Vet. Test. p. 517.

† De Vitis Prophetarum in Epiphaniï op. tom. ii. p. 245.

‡ Relandi Palestina, p. 633.

entitled *Seder Olam* (both great and little), Jarchi, and several other Jewish writers, who are also followed by Drusius, Archbishop Newcome, and other Christian commentators, maintain that he prophesied under Manasseh. Tarnovius, Eckermann, Calmet, and others place him in the reign of Josiah; but Vitringa *, Moldenhawer †, Rosenmüller ‡, and the majority of modern commentators, are of opinion (after Abarbanel) that he delivered his predictions during the reign of Uzziah: consequently, he was contemporary with Amos and Hosea, if indeed he did not prophesy before Amos. This opinion, which we think more probable than any, is supported by the following arguments:—1. Only Egypt and Edom (iii. 19) are enumerated among the enemies of Judah, no mention whatever being made of the Assyrians or Babylonians:—2. Joel (iii. 4—7) denounces the same judgments, as Amos (i. 9—11) against the Tyrians, Sidonians, and Idumeans (who had invaded the kingdom of Judah, carried off its inhabitants, and sold them as slaves to the Gentiles):—3. It appears from Joel ii. 15—17. that, at the time he flourished, the Jews were in the full enjoyment of their religious worship:—4. More prosperous times are promised to Judea, together with uncommon plenty (ii. 18, 19):—5. Although Joel foretells the calamity of famine and barrenness of the land, it is evident from Amos (iv. 6, 7) that the Israelites had not only suffered from the same calamity, but were even then labouring under it.

II. From the palmer-worm, locust, canker-worm, caterpillar, &c. being sent upon the land of Judah, and devouring its fruits (the certain forerunners of a grievous famine), the prophet takes occasion to exhort the Jews to repentance, fasting, and prayer, promising them various temporal and spiritual blessings.

III. This book consists of three chapters, which may be divided into three discourses or sections, viz.

SECTION 1. is an exhortation, both to the priests and to the people, to repent, by reason of the famine brought upon them by the palmer-worm, &c. in consequence of their sins (i. 1—20); and is followed by a denunciation of still greater calamities, if they continued impenitent. This section contains a double prophecy, applicable, in its primary sense, to a plague of locusts, which was to devour the land, and was to be ac-

* *Typus Doctrinæ Prophet. cap. iv. p. 35, et seq.*

† *Introductio in Libros Canonicos Vet. et Nov. Test. pp. 120, 121.*

‡ *Scholia in Vet. Test. Partis Septimæ vol. i. pp. 433, 434.*

accompanied with so severe a drought and famine as should cause the public service of the temple to be interrupted; and, in its secondary sense, it denotes the Babylonian invasion—and perhaps also the invasions of the Persians, Greeks, and Romans, by whom the Jews were successively subjugated.

SECTION 2. An exhortation to keep a public and solemn fast (ii. 12—17), with a promise of removing the calamities of the Jews on their repentance (18—26). From the fertility and prosperity of the land described in these verses, the prophet makes an easy transition to the copious blessings of the Gospel, particularly the effusion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; with these he connects the destruction of the Jewish nation and polity in consequence of their rejecting the Gospel; interspersing promises of safety to the faithful and penitent, which were afterwards signally fulfilled to the Christians in that great national calamity (27—32. Compare Acts ii. 17—21).

SECTION 3. predicts the general conversion and return of the Jews, and the destruction of their opponents, together with the glorious state of the church that is to follow (iii).

IV. The style of Joel, though different from that of Hosea, is highly poetical*: it is elegant, perspicuous, and copious; and at the same time nervous, animated, and sublime. In the two first chapters he displays the full force of the prophetic poetry; and his descriptions of the plague of locusts, of the deep national repentance, and of the happy state of the Christian church, in the last times of the Gospel, are wrought up with admirable force and beauty.

* Early in the last century, M. Hermann Von der Hardt, whom, from his love of philosophical paradoxes, Bishop Lowth has termed the "*Hardouin of Germany*," attempted to reduce Joel's elegies to iambic verse. He accordingly published the three first elegies at Helmstadt, in 1708; and again, with additions, at the same place, in 1720, in 8vo.

SECTION VI.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET MICAH.

I. *Author and date*; — II. *Occasion and scope*; — III. *Synopsis of its contents*; — IV. *Prophecies concerning the Messiah*; — V. *Observations on its style*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 758—699.

I. **MICAH**, the third of the minor prophets according to the arrangement in the Hebrew and all modern copies, as well as in the Septuagint, was a native of Morasthi, a small town in the southern part of the territory of Judah; and, as we learn from the commencement of his predictions, prophesied in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of that country: consequently he was contemporary with Isaiah, Joel, Hosea, and Amos.

II. The people of Judah and Israel being very profane and impenitent in the days of Isaiah * (in consequence of which the Assyrian captivity was then hastening upon Israel, and the Chaldean not long after fell upon Judah), the prophet Micah was raised up to second Isaiah, and to confirm his predictions against the Jews and Israelites, whom he invited to repentance both by threatened judgments and by promised mercies.

III. This book contains seven chapters, forming three sections, viz.

INTRODUCTION or title i. 1.

SECTION 1. comprizes the prophecies delivered in the reign of Jotham king of Judah (with whom Pekah king of Israel was contemporary), in which the divine judgments are denounced against both Israel and Judah for their sins.

SECTION 2. contains the predictions delivered in the reigns of Ahaz king of Judah (with whom his son Hezekiah was associated in the government during the latter part of his life), and of Pekah king of Israel, who was also contemporary with him (ii—iv. 8). In this prophetic discourse, Micah foretells the captivity of both nations (ii. 1—5), and particularly threatens Israel for their enmity to the house of David (6—13) and Judah for their cruelty to the pious (iii. 1—7). He then

* Compare 2 Kings xv—xix. 2 Chron. xxvi—xxx. Isa. xxxvi—xxxviii.

vindicates his prophetic mission (8—12), and predicts the yet future triumphant state of the church (iv. 1—8).

SECTION 3. includes the prophecies delivered by Micah during the reign of Hezekiah king of Judah, the first six years of whose government were contemporary with the greater part of the reign of Hoshea, the last king of Israel (iv. 9—13. v—vii). In this portion of the book of Micah, the Jews are threatened with the Babylonish captivity (iv. 9, 10); the total overthrow of Sennacherib's forces is foretold (11—13); and the pious king Hezekiah is assured of God's preservation by a new promise of the Messiah who should descend from him, and by a prediction of Sennacherib's murder (v. 1—15). The people are then forewarned of the judgments that would befall them for their sins in the reign of Manasseh (vi. 1—16), the wickedness of whose reign is further described, together with his captivity and return from Babylon, as also the return of the Jews from Babylon, and from their general dispersion after they shall be converted to the Gospel.

IV. The book of Micah, who (we have seen) was the contemporary of Isaiah, contains a summary of the prophecies delivered by the latter concerning the Messiah and the final return of the Jews, which are thus translated and arranged by Dr. Hales.

CHAP. V. 2. "And art thou, *Bethlehem Ephratah*, little to be [esteemed] Among the thousands of Judah? —

From thee shall issue [THE LEADER,]

Who shall rule my people, the Israel [of God]

II. (But his issuings are from old,
From days of eternity.)

III. 3. Therefore he will give them up [for a season]

Until the time that *she which shall bear*

Have borne: Then shall return

The residue of thy brethren [the Jews]

Along with the outcasts of Israel.

IV. 4. And He shall stand and guide them

In the strength of THE LORD,

In the majesty of THE NAME OF THE LORD HIS GOD.

And when they return, He shall be magnified

Unto the ends of the earth,

And He shall be their PEACE."

"This prophecy," Dr. Hales remarks, "consists of four parts, 1. The human birth-place of CHRIST. 2. His eternal generation. 3. His temporary desertion of the Jews, until his miraculous birth of the virgin, after which they are to return with the true Israelites. 4. His spiritual and universal dominion.

The application of the first part of this prophecy was decided at the time of OUR SAVIOUR'S birth, by the most respect-

able Jewish synod that ever sate, convened by Herod, to determine from prophecy the birth-place of the MESSIAH, which they agreed to be *Bethlehem*, upon the authority of Micah, which they cited. Their citation, of the first part only, is given by the evangelist Matthew, in an improved translation of the original, greatly superior to any of the antient versions.

Matt. ii. 6. "And thou *Bethlehem*, territory of *Judah*,
Art by no means least among the captains of *Judah*;
From thee shall issue THE LEADER,
Who shall guide my people, the *Israel* [of God.]

1. Here the evangelist has removed the ambiguity of the question proposed by the prophet, by supplying the answer in the negative. As in Nathan's prophecy, "*Shalt thou build me a house?*" (2 Sam. vii. 5), the parallel passage answers in the negative, "*Thou shalt not build me a house*" (1 Chron. xvii. 4).

2. He has supplied a chasm in the Masorete text, of נגיד, *Nagid*, a usual epithet of the MESSIAH (1 Chron. v. 2. Isa. lv. 4. Dan. ix. 25), usually rendered ἡγούμενος, "*leader*," by the Septuagint, and retained here by the evangelist, as a necessary distinction of his character, as supreme commander, from "*the captains of thousands*," styled ἡγεμόσι, judiciously substituted for *the thousands* themselves in Micah, to mark the analogy more correctly.

3. He has also determined the *pastoral* nature of the MESSIAH's "*rule*" by the verb ποιμαίνει, "*shall guide as a shepherd*," afterwards intimated by Micah, ורעה, καὶ ποιμαίνει, as there rendered by the Septuagint. For He is "*the shepherd of Israel*" (Gen. xlix. 24. Psal. lxxx. 1), "*the chief shepherd*" (1 Pet. v. 4), and "*the good shepherd*" (John x. 14), who appointed his apostles to "*guide and pasture his sheep*" (John xxi. 6).

4. The *human* birth of the MESSIAH is carefully distinguished by Micah from his *eternal* generation, in the parenthetical clause, which strongly resembles the account of the primeval birth of Wisdom (Prov. viii. 22—25).

5. *The blessed virgin* of Isaiah's former prophecy (vii. 14.) is evidently alluded to by Micah, and also the *return of the remnant* of the Jews (Isa. x. 20, 21), and of the final *peace* of his kingdom (Isa. ix. 6, 7).

This prophecy of Micah is perhaps the most important single prophecy in the Old Testament, and the most comprehensive, respecting the personal character of the MESSIAH, and his successive manifestation to the world. It crowns the whole chain of prophecies descriptive of the several limitations of *the blessed seed of the woman* to the line of Shem, to the family

of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the tribe of Judah, and to the royal house of David, here terminating in his birth at Bethlehem, "the city of David." It carefully distinguishes his human nativity from his eternal generation; foretels the rejection of the Israelites and Jews for a season; their final restoration, and the universal *peace* destined to prevail throughout the earth in the *Regeneration*. It forms, therefore, the basis of the New Testament, which begins with his human birth at Bethlehem, the miraculous circumstances of which are recorded in the introductions of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels; his eternal generation, as the ORACLE or WISDOM, in the sublime introduction of John's Gospel; his prophetic character, and second coming, illustrated in the four Gospels and *Epistles*, ending with a prediction of the speedy approach of the latter in the *Apocalypse*" (Rev. xxii. 20). *

V. The style of Micah is, for the most part, forcible, pointed, and concise, sometimes approaching the obscurity of Hosea; in many parts animated and sublime, and in general truly poetical.

* Dr. Hales' Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book i. pp. 462, 463.

SECTION VII.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHEE NAHUM.

I. *Author and date*; — II. *Scope and synopsis of its contents*; —
III. *Observations on its style*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 720—698.

I. NAHUM, the seventh of the minor prophets, is supposed to have been a native of Elkosh or Elkosha, a village in Galilee, and situate in the territory that had been apportioned to the tribe of Simeon. There is very great uncertainty concerning the precise time when he lived; some making him contemporary with Jotham, others, with Manasseh, and others, with Josiah. The most probable opinion is that which places him between the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, about the year 715 before the Christian æra: and, as the design of this prophet is, to denounce ruin upon Nineveh and the Assyrians, for their cruel tyranny over the Israelites, and as the captivity of the ten tribes took place in the tenth year of Hoshea king of Israel (2 Kings xvii. 6, &c. compared with 2 Kings xviii. 9—11), it is most likely that Nahum prophesied

against the Assyrians, for the comfort of the people of God, towards the close of Hezekiah's reign.

II. The inhabitants of Nineveh, like those of other great cities abounding in wealth and luxury, having become extremely corrupt in their morals, God commissioned Jonah to preach to them the necessity of repentance, as the only means of averting their imminent destruction. And such was the success of his preaching, that both the king and people repented and turned from their evil ways; and the divine judgment was in consequence delayed for a time. It appears, however, that this repentance was of no long duration; for, the Ninevites relapsing into their former wickedness, the prophet Nahum was commissioned to denounce the final and inevitable ruin of Nineveh and the Assyrian empire by the Chaldeans, and to comfort his countrymen in the certainty of their destruction.

His prophecy is one entire poem, which, opening with a sublime description of the justice and power of God tempered with long-suffering (i. 1—8), foretells the destruction of Sennacherib's forces, and the subversion of the Assyrian empire (9—12), together with the deliverance of Hezekiah and the death of Sennacherib (13—15). The destruction of Nineveh is then predicted, and described with singular minuteness (ii. iii). *

III. In boldness, ardour, and sublimity, Nahum is superior to all the minor prophets. His language is pure; and the exordium of his prophecy, which forms a regular and perfect poem, is not merely magnificent, it is truly majestic. The preparation for the destruction of Nineveh, and the description of its downfall and desolation, are expressed in the most vivid colours, and with images that are truly pathetic and sublime.

* The best commentary, perhaps, on this prophet, is the ninth of Bishop Newton's Dissertations (vol. i. pp. 141—158), in which he has ably illustrated the predictions of Nahum and other prophets who foretold the destruction of Nineveh.

SECTION VIII.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ZEPHANIAH.

I. *Author and date* ; — II. *Scope and analysis of this book.*

BEFORE CHRIST, 640—609.

I. **THIS** prophet, who was “the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah” (i. 1), is supposed to have been of the tribe of Simeon; but, though he has mentioned his ancestors for no less than four generations, nothing certain can be inferred from thence, as to the family to which he belonged. We learn, however, from his prophecy that he delivered his predictions in the reign of Josiah; consequently he prophesied about the time that Jeremiah entered on his prophetic office, and in method and subject he greatly resembles him.

On this account Zephaniah has been considered as the abbreviator of Jeremiah; but it is evident that he prophesied before Jeremiah, because the latter (Jer. ii. 5. 20. 22) seems to speak of those abuses as partially removed, which the former (Zeph. i. 4, 5. 9) describes as existing in the most flagitious extent*. From his account of the disorders prevailing in Judah, it is probable that he discharged the prophetic office before the eighteenth year of Josiah; that is, before this prince had reformed the abuses and corruptions of his dominions. The style of Zephaniah is poetical, though it is not characterized by any striking or uncommon beauties.

II. In consequence of the idolatry and other iniquities prevailing in the kingdom of Judah, whose inhabitants had disregarded the denunciations and admonitions of former prophets, Zephaniah was commissioned to proclaim the enormity of their wickedness, and to denounce the imminent desolation that awaited them; to excite them to repentance, to foretell the destruction of their enemies, and to comfort the pious Jews with promises of future blessings.

His prophecy, which consists of three chapters, may be divided into four sections, viz.

SECTION 1. A denunciation against Judah for their idolatry (i).

* Dr. Gray's Key, p. 483.

SECTION 2. Repentance the only means to avert the divine vengeance (ii. 1—3).

SECTION 3. Prophecies against the Philistines (ii. 4—7), Moabites and Ammonites (8—11), Ethiopia (12), and Nineveh (13—15).

SECTION 4. The captivity of the Jews by the Babylonians foretold (iii. 1—7), together with their future restoration and the ultimate prosperous state of the church (8—20).

THIS prophet, who was "the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah" (i. 1), is supposed to have been of the tribe of Simeon; but, though he has mentioned his ancestors for no less than four generations, nothing certain can be inferred from thence, as to the family to which he belonged. We learn, however, from his prophecy that he delivered his predictions in the reign of Josiah; consequently he prophesied about the time that Jeremiah entered on his prophetic office, and in method and subject he greatly resembles him.

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*This prophecy, which consists of three chapters, may be divided into four sections, viz.
Section I. A denunciation against Judah for their idolatry (i).*

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE PROPHETS WHO FLOURISHED NEAR TO AND DURING
THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

SECTION I.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

I. *Author and date*; — II. *Occasion of his prophecies—different collections of them*; — III. *Synopsis of their contents*; — IV. *Prophecies concerning the Messiah*; — V. *Observations on their style*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 628—586.

I. **THE** prophet Jeremiah was of the sacerdotal race, being (as he himself records) one of the priests that dwelt at Anathoth (i. 1) in the land of Benjamin, a city appropriated out of that tribe to the use of the priests, the sons of Aaron (Josh. xxi. 18), and situate, as we learn from Jerome, about three Roman miles north of Jerusalem*. Some critics have conjectured that his father was the same Hilkiah, the high-priest, who found the book of the law in the temple, in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah (2 Kings xxii. 8); but for this opinion there is no better ground than that he bore the same name, which was of frequent occurrence among the Jews: for, if Hilkiah had really been the high-priest, he would doubtless have been distinguished by that title, and would not have been placed on a level with priests of an ordinary and inferior class. Jeremiah appears to have been very young when he was called to the exercise of the prophetic office, from which he modestly endeavoured to excuse himself, by pleading his youth and incapacity; but being overruled by the divine authority, he set himself to discharge the duties of his function with unremitting diligence and fidelity during a course of at least forty-two years, reckoned from the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign. In the course of his ministry he met with great difficulties and opposition from his countrymen of all degrees, whose persecution and ill usage sometimes wrought so far upon his mind, as to draw from him expressions, in the bitterness of his soul, which many have thought difficult to reconcile with his religious principles; but which, when duly

* Hieronymi Comm. in Jer. cc. i. xi. and xxxi. Eusebii Onomast. voce Anathoth.

weighed, may be found to demand our pity rather than censure. He was, in truth, a man of unblemished piety and conscientious integrity; a warm lover of his country, whose miseries he pathetically deplores; and so affectionately attached to his countrymen, notwithstanding their injurious treatment of him, that he chose rather to abide with them, and undergo all hardships in their company, than separately to enjoy a state of ease and plenty, which the favour of the king of Babylon would have secured to him. At length, after the destruction of Jerusalem, having followed the remnant of the Jews into Egypt, whither they had resolved to retire, though contrary to his advice, upon the murder of Gedaliah, whom the Chaldeans had left governor in Judea, he there continued warmly to remonstrate against their idolatrous practices, foretelling the consequences that would inevitably follow. But his freedom and zeal are said to have cost him his life; for there is a tradition, that the Jews at Tahpanhes, were so offended at his faithful remonstrances, that they stoned him to death, which account of the manner of his decease, though not absolutely certain, is at least very likely to be true, considering the temper and disposition of the parties concerned. Their wickedness, however, did not long pass without its reward; for in a few years after they were miserably destroyed by the Babylonian armies which invaded Egypt, according to the prophet's prediction (xliv. 27, 28). * Some Jewish writers, however, affirm that he returned to Judea, while others say that he went to Babylon, and died there; and a third class are of opinion that he died in Egypt, far advanced in years, and broken by the calamities which had happened both to himself and his country. This prophet's writings are all in Hebrew, except the eleventh verse of the tenth chapter, which is Chaldee.

II. The idolatrous apostasy and other criminal enormities of the people of Judah, and the severe judgments which God was preparing to inflict upon them, though not without a distant prospect of future restoration and deliverance, form the principal subjects of the prophecies of Jeremiah; except the forty-fifth chapter which relates personally to Baruch, and the six following chapters which respect the fortunes of some particular Heathen nations.

It is evident, from various passages of this book, that there were four distinct collections of Jeremiah's prophecies. The first was that mentioned in chap. xxxvi. 2, and made by divine

* Dr. Blayney's Translation of Jeremiah, pp. 221, 222. 2d edit.

command in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim. In this collection were contained all the predictions which he had delivered and published, to that time, as well against other nations as against the Jews: the prophecies against the Gentiles are, in our Bibles, placed by themselves at the end of the book, as being in some measure unconnected with those denounced against the Jews; but in the present copies of the Septuagint, they follow immediately after the thirteenth verse of the twenty-fifth chapter *. This *first* collection comprized chapters i—xx. xxv. xxvi. xxxv. xxxvi. xlv—li. inclusive.

The *second* collection is that mentioned in chap. xxx. 2, and contained chapters xxvii—xxxi. inclusive: it was made in the reign of Zedekiah, and, as may be inferred from xxviii. 1, after the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah.

The *third* collection was made soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, as is plainly indicated by the prophet himself in the general preface to his book, where he says that the word of Jehovah came to him “in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign; and came in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, until the completion of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, *until the carrying away of Jerusalem into captivity in the fifth month*” (i. 1—3). Consequently, this third collection included chapters xxi—xxiv. xxxii—xxxiv. and xxxvii—xxxix.

The fourth collection, containing chapters xl—xlv. inclusive, presents us with an account of Jeremiah himself, and of the other Jews who were left in Judea by the command of Nebuchadnezzar. The fifty-second chapter was probably added by Ezra † as a preface to the book of Lamentations. It is chiefly taken out of the latter part of the second book of Kings, with additions, which Ezra might supply out of the inspired records, and forms a very useful appendage to the prophecies of Jeremiah, as it illustrates their fulfilment in the destruction of the kingdom, city, and temple, which are the subject of the Lamentations.

III. From the preceding statements it is obvious that the prophecies of Jeremiah are not arranged in the chronological order in which they were originally delivered; the cause

* Carpzov has written an elaborate disquisition on the variations between the Hebrew and the Septuagint, in the order of Jeremiah's prophecies; and has given a table illustrating those variations. See his *Introd. ad Libros Biblicos Vet. Test.* pars iii. c. iii. § 4. pp. 144—152.

† Carpzov ascribes it to Baruch or some other inspired man. *Introd.* pars iii. p. 152.

of their transposition it is now impossible to ascertain. The late Rev. Dr. Blayney, to whom we are indebted for a learned version of, and commentary on, the writings of this prophet, has endeavoured, with great judgment, to restore their proper order by transposing the chapters wherever it appeared to be necessary. According to his arrangement, the predictions of Jeremiah are to be placed in the following order, viz.

1. *The prophecies delivered in the reign of Josiah*, containing chapters i—xii. inclusive.

2. *The prophecies delivered in the reign of Jehoiakim*, comprising chapters xiii—xx. xxii. xxiii. xxxv. xxxvi. xlv—xlvi. and xlix. 1—33.

3. *The prophecies delivered in the reign of Zedekiah*, including chapters xxi. xxiv. xxvii—xxxiv. xxxvii—xxxix. xlix. 34—39, and l. li.

4. *The prophecies delivered under the government of Gedaliah*, from the taking of Jerusalem to the retreat of the people into Egypt, and the prophecies of Jeremiah delivered to the Jews in that country; comprehending chapters xl.—xlv. inclusive.

As this arrangement throws much light upon the prophecies of Jeremiah, it has been adopted in the following synopsis, which accordingly consists of four sections.

THE INTRODUCTION to the Book contains its title (i. 1—3), the call of Jeremiah to the prophetic office and the commission given him by God (4—10); the purport of which is explained by two visions, that of an almond tree (11), indicating the nearness, and the vision of a seething-pot, the severity of the divine judgments. The face of the pot being turned from the north denoted that they were to be inflicted by the Babylonians and Chaldeans, whose empire lay to the north of Judea, and poured forth its multitudes like a thick vapour to overspread the land.

SECTION 1. comprizes such prophecies as were delivered in the reign of Josiah (ch. ii—xii).

DISCOURSE 1. God, by his prophet, expresses his continued regard for the Jews (ii. 1—3), with whom he expostulates on account of their ungrateful returns for his past goodness (4—13), and shows that it was their own extreme and unparalleled wickedness and disloyalty which had already subjected, and would still expose them to calamities and misery (14—30). This discourse concludes with a pathetic address, exhorting the Jews to return to God, and forewarning them of the fatal consequences of their disobedience (31—37, iii. 1—5). Dr. Blayney thinks

that this prophecy was delivered soon after the commencement of Jeremiah's prophetic commission.

DISCOURSE 2. consists of two parts. The *first* part contains a complaint against Judah for having exceeded the guilt of her sister Israel, whom God had already cast off for her idolatrous apostasy (iii. 6—12). The charge of Judah with hypocrisy in the 10th verse points out the date of this prophetic discourse to have been some time after the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, when the people, under the influence of their good king, were professedly engaged in measures of reformation, which however are here declared to have been insincere. The prophet is then commissioned to announce to Israel the promise of pardon upon her repentance, and the hope of a glorious restoration in after times, which are plainly indicated to be the times of the Gospel, when the Gentiles themselves were to become a part of the church (12—21). In consequence of these declarations of mercy, the children of Israel, confessing and bewailing their sins, have the same comfortable assurances repeated to them (22—25. iv. 1, 2). In the *second* part, which is prefaced with an address to the people of Judah and Jerusalem, exhorting them to prevent the divine judgments by a timely repentance (iv. 3—5), the Babylonian captivity is clearly and fully predicted, with all its attendant miseries; and the universal and incorrigible depravity of the people is represented at large, and stated to be the justly provoking cause of the national ruin (iv. 6—31. v. vi.)

DISCOURSE 3. Although the date of this prophecy is not precisely marked, Dr. Blayney thinks it probable that it was delivered shortly after the preceding, and, it should seem, on the following occasion. Besides the prophets who were commissioned to announce the approaching calamities of Judah and Jerusalem, there were others who took upon themselves to flatter the people with opposite predictions. They taught them to regard such threats as groundless; since God (they said) would have too much regard for his own honour to suffer his temple to be profaned, and the seat of his holiness to be given up into the hands of strangers. In the former part of this discourse, therefore, Jeremiah is commanded openly to reprove the falsehood of those assertions, and to show, by an example in point, that the sanctity of the place would afford no security to the guilty; but that God would assuredly do

by his house at Jerusalem what he had done unto Shiloh, and would cast the people of Judah out of his sight, as he had already cast off the people of Israel for their wickedness (vii. 1—16). God justifies the severity of his proceedings, by a representation of the people's impiety and idolatry (17—20). The prophet declares that their sacrifices would be unacceptable, while they continued deaf to the calls of God's messengers (21—28); he further specifies the gross idolatries with which they were defiled, and pronounces a heavy sentence of divine vengeance both on the dead and on the living (29—34. viii. 1—3). In the latter part of this discourse, the prophet, at first, in the name of Jehovah, reproves the Jews, who vainly thought that He would save them because they had his law among them, though they kept not that law (viii. 4—17). Next, in his own person, Jeremiah gives vent to his lamentations at the foresight of the calamities which the Chaldeans would inflict upon the Jews (18—22. ix.); and earnestly dissuades his countrymen from idolatry (x. 1—18). Jerusalem is then introduced, as lamenting the completion of her ruin, and humbly supplicating the divine mercy (19—25). In perusing this part of the prophet's discourse, the difference of speakers must be attended to; the transition from one to another being very quick and sudden, but full of animation and energy.

DISCOURSE 4. was probably delivered towards the close of Josiah's reign*; when the people, having forgotten the solemn covenant engagements which they had made in the 18th year of Josiah (2 Kings xxii. 3. xxiii. 3), are supposed to have relapsed into their former disregard and neglect of the divine law. The prophet was therefore sent to recal them to their duty, by proclaiming anew the terms of the covenant, and rebuking them sharply for their hereditary disobedience (xi. 1—8). He denounces severe judgments against the people of Judah and Jerusalem for their idolatrous apostasy (9—17). Being informed, by divine revelation, of the conspiracy of the men of Anathoth against his life, he prays against them, and is authorized to foretell their utter destruction (18—23); and, emboldened by the success of his prayers, he expostulates with God concerning the prosperity of the wicked (xii. 1—6), who answers the prophet's expostulation (7—13),

* Mr. Reeves and other commentators refer it to the commencement of Jehoiakim's reign, and consequently after the death of Josiah.

and promises the future restoration and conversion of his people, with a declaration that the unbelieving would utterly perish (14—17).

SECTION 2. contains the prophecies delivered in the reign of Jehoiakim.

DISCOURSE 1. comprizes a single and distinct prophecy; which, under two symbols, a linen girdle left to rot, and the breaking of bottles filled with wine, foretells the utter destruction that was destined to fall on the whole Jewish nation (xiii. 1—14). An exhortation to humiliation and repentance is subjoined (v. 15—21); and their incorrigible wickedness and profligacy are assigned as the cause of all the evils that imminently awaited them (22—27). The particular mention of the downfall of the king and queen in the 18th verse, Dr. Blayney thinks, will justify the opinion which ascribes this prophecy to the commencement of the reign of Jehoiakim, whose fate with that of his queen is in like manner noticed together in ch. xxii. 18.

DISCOURSE 2. was, in all probability, delivered shortly after the preceding. It predicts a severe famine, to punish the Jews for their sins, but which does not bring them to repentance (xiv. 1—22); and announces God's peremptory decree to destroy Judah, unless they should speedily repent (xv. 1—9). The prophet, complaining that he is become an object of hatred by reason of his office, receives a promise of divine protection (10—21).

DISCOURSE 3. foretells the utter ruin of the Jews, in the type of the prophet being forbidden to marry and to feast (xvi. 1—13); and immediately afterwards announces their future restoration (14, 15), as well as the conversion of the Gentiles (16—21); accompanied with a severe reproof of the Jews for their too great reliance on human aid (xvii. 1—18).

DISCOURSE 4. is a distinct prophecy concerning the strict observance of the sabbath-day (xvii. 19—27), which Jeremiah was commanded to proclaim aloud in all the gates of Jerusalem, as a matter that concerned the conduct of each individual, and the general happiness of the whole nation.

DISCOURSE 5. shows, under the type of a potter, God's absolute authority over nations and kingdoms, to alter and regulate their condition at his own discretion (xviii. 1—10). The prophet is then directed to exhort the Jews to avert their impending dangers by repentance and reformation, and, on their refusal, to predict their destruc-

tion (11—17). The Jews conspiring against him, Jeremiah implores judgment against them (18—23).

DISCOURSE 6. Under the type of breaking a potter's vessel, is foretold the desolation of the Jews for their sins (xix): and a severe judgment is denounced against Pashur for apprehending and punishing Jeremiah (xx. 1—6), who complains of the persecutions he met with (7—18).

DISCOURSE 7. is supposed to have been delivered immediately after the preceding, and in the precincts of the temple, whence the prophet is commanded to "go down to the house of the king of Judah." It commences with an address to the king, his servants, and people, recommending an inviolable adherence to right and justice as the only means of establishing the throne, and preventing the ruin of both prince and people (xxii. 1—9). The captivity of Shallum is declared to be irreversible (10—12). Jehoiakim is severely reproved for his tyrannical oppressions (13—19). His family is threatened with a continuance of similar calamities; the fall and captivity of his son Jeconiah are explicitly set forth, together with the perpetual exclusion of his posterity from the throne (20—30). The prophecy concludes with consolatory promises of future blessings, of the return of the people from captivity, and of happier times under better governors; of the glorious establishment of Messiah's kingdom; and of the subsequent final restoration of all the dispersed Israelites to their own land (xxiii. 1—8).

DISCOURSE 8. denounces the divine judgments against false prophets, and mockers of true prophets (xxiii. 9—40).

DISCOURSE 9. predicts that the Babylonian captivity shall continue seventy years (xxv. 1—11), at the expiration of which Babylon was to be destroyed (12—14); and the destruction of Judah and several other countries (including Babylon herself, here called Sheshach) is prefigured by the prophet's drinking a cup of wine (15—38).

DISCOURSE 10. Jeremiah being directed to foretell the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem, without a speedy repentance and reformation (xxvi. 1—6), is apprehended and accused before the council, but is acquitted, his advocate urging the precedent of Micah in the reign of Hezekiah (7—19). The sacred writer then observes, in his own person, that, notwithstanding the precedent of Micah, there had been a later precedent in the present reign, which might have operated very unfavourably to the cause of Jeremiah, but for the powerful influence

and authority exercised in his behalf by Ahikam, the son of Shaphan (20—24).

DISCOURSE 11. The Jews' disobedience to God is condemned by comparison with the obedience of the Rechabites to the commands of Jonadab their father, who had prescribed to them a certain rule of life (xxxv).

DISCOURSE 12. By divine appointment Jeremiah causes Baruch to write all his former prophecies in a roll, and to read them to the people on a fast-day (xxxvi. 1—10). The princes, being informed of it, send for Baruch, who reads the roll before them (11—15). Filled with consternation at its contents, they advise Jeremiah and Baruch to hide themselves (16—19); they acquaint the king, who sends for the roll, and, having heard part of its contents, he cuts it to pieces, and burns it (20—26). Jeremiah is commanded to write it anew, and to denounce the judgments of God against Jehoiakim (27—31). Baruch accordingly writes a new copy with additions (32); but being greatly alarmed at the threatenings contained in those predictions, and being perhaps afraid of sharing in the persecutions of the prophet, God commissions Jeremiah to assure Baruch that his life should be preserved by a special providence amidst all the calamities denounced against Judah (xlv).

DISCOURSE 13. contains a series of prophecies against several heathen nations (xlvi. 1), which are supposed to have been placed towards the close of the book of Jeremiah, as being in some measure unconnected with the others. As however, in point of time, they were evidently delivered during the reign of Jehoiakim, they may with great propriety be referred to the present section. In this discourse are comprized,

- (1.) A prophecy of the defeat of the Egyptians, that garrisoned Carchemish, by the Chaldeans (xlvi. 2—12), and of the entire conquest of that country by Nebuchadnezzar (13—28).
- (2.) Predictions of the subjugation of the land of the Philistines, including Tyre (xlvii), and also of the Moabites (xlviii.) by the forces of Nebuchadnezzar.
- (3.) Predictions of the conquest of the Ammonites (xlix. 1—6), by the same monarch, and likewise of the land of Edom (7—22), of Damascus (23—27), and of Kedar (28—33).

SECTION 3. contains the prophecies delivered in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah.

DISCOURSE 1. A prediction of the conquest of Elam or Persia by the Chaldeans, delivered in the beginning of Zedekiah's reign (xlix. 34—39). The restoration promised to Elam in verse 39. we find fulfilled in Dan. viii. 2.

DISCOURSE 2. Under the type of good and bad figs, God represents to Jeremiah the different manner in which he should deal with the people, that were already gone into captivity, and with Zedekiah and his subjects who were left behind;—showing favour and kindness to the former in their restoration and re-establishment, but pursuing the latter with unrelenting judgments to utter destruction (xxiv).

DISCOURSE 3. The Jews at Babylon are warned not to believe such as pretended to foretel their speedy return into their own country (xxix.—1—23); and judgment is denounced against Shemaiah for writing against Jeremiah to the Jews at Babylon (24—32). Dr. Blayney has remarked that, in the Septuagint version, the fifteenth verse of this chapter is read immediately after verse 20, which seems to be its original and proper place.

DISCOURSE 4. contains prophecies of the restoration of the Jews from Babylon, but chiefly from their dispersion by the Romans, on their general conversion to Christianity (xxx); and predicts their happy state after that glorious event shall be accomplished (xxxi. 1—26), concluding with a fuller prophecy describing the Gospel state, as also the state of the Jews after their conversion (27—38).

DISCOURSE 5. Zedekiah, in the fourth year of his reign, being solicited by ambassadors from the kings of Edom, Moab, and other neighbouring nations, to join them in a confederacy against the king of Babylon, the prophet Jeremiah is commissioned, under the type of bonds and yokes, to admonish them, especially Zedekiah, quietly to submit to the king of Babylon, and warns them not to credit the suggestions of false prophets (xxvii); and the death of one of them is announced within a limited time, as a proof to the people that he was not divinely commissioned (xxviii. 1—16), which accordingly came to pass (17).

DISCOURSE 6. contains a prophecy concerning the fall of Babylon, intermixed and contrasted with predictions concerning the redemption of Israel and Judah, who were not, like their predecessors, to be finally extirpated, but to survive, and, upon their repentance and conversion, they were to be pardoned and restored (l. li. 1—58). This

prophecy against Babylon was delivered in the fourth year of Zedekiah's reign, and sent to the Jews there, in order to be read to them; after which it was to be sunk in the Euphrates, as a type of the perpetual destruction of Babylon. *

DISCOURSE 7. was probably delivered in the ninth year of Zedekiah, previously to the siege of Jerusalem, which commenced in the tenth month of that year. In this prophecy, Jeremiah (who had been requested to intercede with God in behalf of his people) declared that God was against them, and that their only resource for safety was to surrender themselves to the Chaldeans (xxi. 1—10); and the members of the royal house are warned to prevent the effects of God's indignation by doing justice, and not to trust to their strong-hold, which would be of no avail whatever to them when God was bent upon their destruction (11—14).

DISCOURSE 8. consists of two distinct prophecies. The *first*, probably delivered towards the close of the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, announces to the Jewish monarch the capture and burning of Jerusalem, his own captivity, peaceful death, and honourable interment (xxxiv. 1—7). The second prophecy, which was announced some time after, severely reproves and threatens the Jews for their perfidious violation of the covenant they had newly made of obedience to God (8—22).

DISCOURSE 9. Jeremiah foretels the return of the Chaldeans to the siege of Jerusalem, which they had suspended to pursue the Egyptians, who retreated before them, and that the holy city should be taken by the forces of Nebuchadnezzar (xxxvii. 1—10). For this he was put into a dungeon (11—15), from which he was released, but still kept a prisoner, though the rigour of his confinement was abated (16—21).

DISCOURSE 10. confirms the promised return of the Jews from captivity, by Jeremiah being commanded to buy a field (xxxii).

* The fifty-first chapter of Jeremiah closes with the following sentence—"Thus far are the words of Jeremiah;" which, Dr. Blayney thinks, was added by the person (whoever it might be) that collected his prophecies, and digested them in the order in which we now find them in the Hebrew Bibles. This sentence does not occur in the Septuagint version, where indeed it could not be introduced at the end of this chapter, because the chapters are ranged differently in that version; and chapter li. forms only the twenty-eighth of the collection. The disposition of Jeremiah's prophecies is, apparently, so arbitrary, that it is not likely that it was made under the prophet's direction.

DISCOURSE 11. predicts the restoration of Israel and Judah (xxxiii. 1—9), and their prosperity in consequence of that event (10—13). Thence the prophet makes a transition to the great promise of the Messiah, and the happiness and stability they should enjoy in his times (14—26). These predictions, so far as they respect the great body of the Jews, remain yet to be fulfilled.

DISCOURSE 12. contains the last transaction in which Jeremiah was prophetically concerned before the taking of Jerusalem. It relates the imprisonment of Jeremiah in a deep and miry dungeon, at the instance of the princes of Judah (xxxviii. 1—6); his deliverance thence (7—13); and the prophet's advice to Zedekiah, who had consulted him privately, to surrender to the Chaldeans (14—27). The capture of the city and king is then related (xxxix. 1—10), together with the treatment of the prophet by the order of Nebuchadnezzar (11—13); and the discourse concludes with a prediction of personal safety to Ebed-melech (who had kindly treated the prophet) amidst the ensuing public calamities (15—18).

SECTION 4. contains a particular account of what passed in the land of Judah, from the taking of Jerusalem to the retreat of the Jewish people into Egypt, and the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning them while in that country.

DISCOURSE 1. Jeremiah has his choice either to go to Babylon, or to remain in Judea (xl. 1—6), whither the dispersed Jews repaired to Gedaliah the governor (7—12); who being treacherously slain (13—16. xli. 1—10), the Jews left in Judea intend to go down to Egypt (11—18), from which course the prophet dissuades them (xlii.).

DISCOURSE 2. The Jews going into Egypt contrary to the divine command (xliii. 1—7), Jeremiah foretels to them the conquest of that kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar (8—13); he predicts destruction to all the Jews that willingly went into Egypt (xliv. 1—13), whose obstinate idolatry is related (14—19), destruction is denounced against them, and the dethronement of Pharaoh Hophrah king of Egypt is foretold (20—30).

The **CONCLUSION** of Jeremiah's prophecy, containing the fifty-second chapter, was added after his time*, subsequently to the return from captivity, of which it gives a short account, and forms a proper argument or introduction to the Lamentations of Jeremiah.

* See p. 275, *supra*, of this volume.

IV. Although the greater part of Jeremiah's predictions related to his countrymen the Jews, many of whom lived to behold their literal fulfilment, and thus attested his prophetic mission, while several of his predictions concerned other nations (as will be seen from the preceding analysis); yet two or three of his prophecies so clearly announce the Messiah, that it would be a blameable omission, were we to pass them unnoticed.

In ch. xxiii. 5, 6. is foretold the mediatorial kingdom of the Messiah, who is called the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. On this passage Dr. Hales has cited the following remark from the antient rabbinical book of *Ikkarim*, which (he observes) well expresses the reason of the appellation:—"The Scripture calls the name of the MESSIAH, JAOH, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, to intimate that he will be A MEDIATORIAL GOD, by whose hand we shall obtain *justification* from THE NAME: wherefore it calls him by the name of THE NAME, (that is, the ineffable name JAOH, here put for GOD HIMSELF)." *

Again, in Jer. xxxi. 31—36. and xxxiii. 8, the efficacy of Christ's atonement, the spiritual character of the new covenant, and the inward efficacy of the Gospel, are most clearly and emphatically described. Compare Saint Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. viii. 8—13. and x. 16, *et seq.* †

V. The STYLE of Jeremiah, though not deficient in elegance or sublimity, is considered by Bishop Lowth as being inferior

* Dr. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book i. p. 481. who cites Buxtorf's Lexicon, voce *יְהוָה*. Dr. H. thinks that St. Paul derived the declarations he has made concerning Jesus Christ, in 1 Cor. i. 30. and Phil. ii. 9—11, from the above cited passage of Jeremiah.

† The antient fathers of the Christian church, and also most modern commentators, have applied Jer. xxxi. 22. to the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ; but Grotius, Castalio, and others, particularly Dr. Blayney, have contended for a different interpretation. Dr. B. translates the passage thus:

How long wilt thou turn thyself away, O refractory virgin?

For Jehovah is about to create a new thing in the earth;

A woman shall put to the rout a strong man.

Having vindicated this rendering, he observes, that the last clause may, by a proverbial form of speech, denote, *The weaker shall prevail over the stronger*. "Now this, it must be confessed, is in itself new and unusual, and contrary to the ordinary course of nature; but then it is ascribed to the interposing power of God, who is said therein to "create a new thing," or, in other words, to work a miracle. The connexion of this sense with the context is easy to be explained. The virgin of Israel is exhorted not to turn aside or to decline the invitation given her to return, as she might perhaps be disposed to do, through dread of the power of enemies who would oppose her deliverance. For her encouragement she is told that she had no reason to be apprehensive of the superior strength of any enemies, since God would work a miracle in her favour, and enable her, though apparently weaker, to overcome and prevail against all opposition. See verse 11. By *women*, weak and feeble persons are intended. See ch. l. 37. li. 30. Isa. xix. 16." Blayney's Jeremiah, p. 372. See also W. Lowth's Commentary on the Prophets, p. 200.

in both respects to Isaiah. Jerome *, after some Jewish writers, has objected to the prophet a certain rusticity of expression which however, it is very difficult to trace. Though the sentiments of Jeremiah are not always the most elevated, nor his periods uniformly neat and compact; yet his style is in a high degree beautiful and tender, especially when he has occasion to excite the softer passions of grief and pity, which is frequently the case in the earlier parts of his prophecies †. These are chiefly poetical. The middle of his book is almost entirely historical, and is written in a plain prosaic style, suitable to historical narrative. On many occasions he is very elegant and sublime, especially in xlv—li. 1—59, which are wholly poetical, and in which the prophet approaches very near the sublimity of Isaiah.

* Pref. ad Com. in Jerem.

† See the whole of ch. ix. ch. xiv. 17, &c. and xx. 14—18.

SECTION II.

ON THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

I. *Author, date, and argument of the book*; — II. *Synopsis of its contents*; — III. *Observations on its style and structure*.

I. **THAT** Jeremiah was the author of the Elegies or Lamentations which bear his name, is evident, not only from a very antient and almost uninterrupted tradition, but also from the argument and style of the book, which correspond exactly with those of his prophecies.

Josephus, Jerome, Junius, Archbishop Usher, and other eminent writers, are of opinion that the Lamentations of Jeremiah were the same which are mentioned in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. as being composed by the prophet on the death of the pious king Josiah, and which are there said to have been perpetuated by “an ordinance in Israel.” But, whatever may have become of those Lamentations, it is evident that these cannot possibly be the same: for their whole tenor plainly shows that they were not composed till after the subversion of the kingdom of Judah. The calamities which Jeremiah had foretold in his prophecies, are here deplored as having actually taken place, viz. the impositions of the false prophets who had seduced the

people by their lying declarations, the destruction of the holy city and temple, the overthrow of the state, and the extermination of the people. But though it be allowed that the Lamentations were primarily intended as a pathetic description of present calamities, yet it has with great probability been conjectured that, while Jeremiah mourns the desolation of Judah and Jerusalem, he may be considered as prophetically painting the still greater miseries they were to suffer at some future time; and this seems plainly indicated by his referring to the time when the punishment of their iniquity shall be accomplished, and they shall no more be carried into captivity (iv. 22). *

II. This book, which in our Bibles is divided into five chapters, consists of five distinct elegies; viz.

ELEGY 1. The prophet begins with lamenting the sad reverse of fortune which his country had experienced, confessing at the same time that all her miseries were the just consequences of the national wickedness and rebellion against God. In the midst of his discourse, Jerusalem herself is personified, and introduced to continue the complaint, and humbly to solicit the divine compassion. Jahn is of opinion that, in this elegy, Jeremiah deplores the deportation of king Jehoiachin, and ten thousand of the principal Jews, to Babylon. Compare 2 Kings xxiv. 8—17. and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, 10.

ELEGY 2. Jeremiah portrays the dire effects of the divine anger in the subversion of the civil and religious constitution of the Jews, and in that extreme misery in which every class of individuals was involved. He represents the wretchedness of his country as unparalleled; and charges the false prophets with having betrayed her into ruin by their false and flattering suggestions. In this forlorn and desolate condition,—the astonishment and by-word of all who see her,—Jerusalem is directed earnestly to implore the removal of those heavy judgments, which God, in the height of his displeasure, had inflicted upon her.—Jahn thinks that this elegy was composed on the storming of Jerusalem by the Babylonian army.

ELEGY 3. The prophet, by describing his own severe afflictions, and showing his trust in the inexhaustible mercies of God, encourages his people to be patient and resigned under the divine chastisements, and to trust in the never-

* Bishop Tomline's *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. i. pp. 112, 113.

failing mercy of Jehovah. He asserts the divine supremacy in the dispensations of good and evil, and shows the unreasonableness of murmuring under them. He recommends self-examination and repentance; and, from their past experience of former deliverances from God, he encourages them to look for pardon of their sins, and retribution to their enemies.

ELEGY 4. exhibits a striking contrast, in various affecting instances, between the present deplorable and wretched condition of his country and her former state of prosperity; and ascribes the unhappy change chiefly to the profligacy of its priests and prophets. The national calamities are deeply and tenderly lamented, especially the captivity of their sovereign Zedekiah. This elegy concludes with predicting the judgments that were impending over the Edomites, who had insulted the Jews in their distress.

ELEGY 5. is an epilogue or conclusion to the preceding chapters or elegies. In the Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate versions, this chapter is entitled THE PRAYER OF JEREMIAH; but no such title appears in the Hebrew copies, or in the Septuagint version. It is rather, as Dr. Blayney has remarked, a memorial representing, in the name of the whole body of Jewish exiles, the numerous calamities under which they groaned; and humbly supplicating God to commiserate their wretchedness, and to restore them to his favour, and to their antient prosperity.

III. The Lamentations are evidently written in metre, and contain a number of plaintive effusions composed after the manner of funeral dirges. Bishop Lowth is of opinion that they were originally written by the prophet, as they arose in his mind, in a long course of separate stanzas, and that they were subsequently collected into one poem. Each elegy consists of twenty-two periods, according to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet; although it is in the four first chapters only that the several periods begin (after the manner of an acrostic) with the different letters following each other in alphabetical order. By this contrivance, the metre is more precisely marked and ascertained, particularly in the third chapter, where each period contains three verses, all having the same initial letter. The two first chapters, in like manner, consist of triplets, excepting only the seventh period of the first and the nineteenth of the second, each of which has a supernumerary line. The fourth chapter resembles the three former in metre, but the periods are only couplets; and in the

fifth chapter the periods are couplets, though of a considerably shorter measure.

Although there is no artificial or methodical arrangement of the subject in these incomparable elegies, yet they are totally free from wild incoherency or abrupt transition. Never, perhaps, was there a greater variety of beautiful, tender, and pathetic images, all expressive of the deepest distress and sorrow, more happily chosen and applied than in the lamentations of this prophet; nor can we too much admire the full and graceful flow of that pathetic eloquence, in which the author pours forth the effusions of a patriot heart, and piously weeps over the ruin of his venerable country. *

* Dr. Blayney's Jeremiah, pp. 455, *et seq.* Bishop Lowth's Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, lect. xxii. *in fine.* Jahn, Introd. ad Vet. Fœd. pp. 415—417. Carpzov, Introd. ad Libros Biblicos, pars iii. cap. iv. pp. 177—197.

SECTION III.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET HABAKKUK.

I. *Author and date*;—II. *Analysis of his prophecy*;—III. *Observations on his style.*

BEFORE CHRIST, 612—598.

I. **WE** have no certain information concerning the tribe or birth-place of Habakkuk. The Pseudo-Epiphanius affirms that he was of the tribe of Simeon, and was born at Bethcazar. Some commentators have supposed that he prophesied in Judea in the reign of Manasseh, but Archbishop Usher places him, with greater probability, in the reign of Jehoiakim. Compare Hab. i. 5, 6. Consequently this prophet was contemporary with Jeremiah. Several apocryphal predictions and other writings are ascribed to Habakkuk, but without any foundation. His genuine writings are comprized in the three chapters which have been transmitted to us; and the subject of them is the same with that of Jeremiah, viz. the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, for the heinous sins of the Jewish people, and the consolation of the faithful amid all their national calamities.

II. The prophecy of Habakkuk consists of two parts; the first is in the form of a dialogue between God and the Prophet, and the second is a sublime ode or hymn, which was probably intended to be used in the public service.

PART 1. The prophet complaining of the growth of iniquity among the Jews (i. 1—4), God is introduced, announcing the Babylonish captivity as a punishment for their wickedness (5—11). The prophet then humbly expostulates with God, for punishing the Jews by the instrumentality of the Chaldeans (12—17. ii. 1). In answer to this complaint, God replies that he will, in due time, perform his promises to his people, of deliverance by the Messiah (implying also the nearer deliverance by Cyrus) (ii. 2—4). The destruction of the Babylonish empire is then foretold, together with the judgment that would be inflicted upon the Chaldeans for their covetousness, cruelty, and idolatry (5—20).

PART 2. Contains the prayer or psalm of Habakkuk, in which he implores God to hasten the deliverance of his people (iii. 1, 2), and takes occasion to recount the wonderful works of the Almighty in conducting his people through the wilderness, and giving them possession of the promised land (3—16); whence he encourages himself and other pious persons to rely upon God for making good his promises to their posterity in after ages.

III. Habakkuk holds a distinguished rank among the sacred poets; whoever reads his prophecy must be struck with the grandeur of its imagery and the sublimity of its style, especially of the hymn in the third chapter, which Bishop Lowth considers one of the most perfect specimens of the Hebrew ode. Michaelis, after a close examination, pronounces him to be a great imitator of former poets, but with some new additions of his own, which are characterized by brevity, and by no common degree of sublimity. Compare Hab. ii. 12. with Mic. iii. 10, and Hab. ii. 14. with Isa. xi. 9.

SECTION IV.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET DANIEL.

I. *Author and date*;—II. *Analysis of its contents*;—III. *Observations on its canonical authority and style*; IV. *Account of the spurious additions made to it.*

BEFORE CHRIST, 606—534.

I. DANIEL, the fourth of the greater prophets, if not of royal birth (as the Jews affirm), was of noble descent, and was carried captive to Babylon at an early age, in the fourth year of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year 606 before the Christian æra, and seven years before the deportation of Ezekiel. Having been instructed in the language and literature of the Chaldeans, he afterwards held a very distinguished office in the Babylonian empire (Dan. i. 1—4). He was contemporary with Ezekiel, who mentions his extraordinary piety and wisdom (Ezek. xiv. 14, 20), and the latter even at that time seems to have become proverbial (Ezek. xxviii. 3). Daniel lived in great credit with the Babylonian monarchs; and his uncommon merit procured him the same regard from Darius and Cyrus, the two first sovereigns of Persia. He lived throughout the captivity, but it does not appear that he returned to his own country when Cyrus permitted the Jews to revisit their native land. The Pseudo-Epiphanius, who wrote the lives of the prophets, says that he died at Babylon; and this assertion has been adopted by most succeeding writers; but as the last of his visions, of which we have any account, took place in the third year of Cyrus, about 534 years before the Christian æra, when he was about ninety-four years of age, and resided at Susa on the Tigris, it is not improbable that he died there.

Although the name of Daniel is not prefixed to his book, the many passages in which he speaks in the first person sufficiently prove that he was the author. He is not reckoned among the prophets by the Jews since the time of Jesus Christ, who say that he lived the life of a courtier in the court of the king of Babylon, rather than that of a prophet: and they further assert, that, though he received divine revelations, yet these were only by dreams and visions of the night, which they consider as the most imperfect mode of revelation. But Josephus, one of the most antient profane writers of that

nation, accounts Daniel one of the greatest of the prophets; and says that he conversed familiarly with God, and not only predicted future events (as other prophets did) but also determined the time in which they should happen. *

II. The book of Daniel may be divided into two parts. The first is historical, and contains a relation of various circumstances that happened to himself and to the Jews, under several kings at Babylon; the second is strictly prophetical, and comprizes the visions and prophecies with which he was favoured, and which enabled him to foretel numerous important events relative to the monarchies of the world, the time of the advent and death of the Messiah, the restoration of the Jews, and the conversion of the Gentiles.

PART 1. contains the historical part of the book of Daniel (ch. i—vi), forming six sections, viz.

SECTION i. The education of Daniel and his companions at Babylon, on being carried thither from the land of Judah by order of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. i.)

SECTION ii. Nebuchadnezzar's dream concerning an image composed of different metals (ii. 1—13); the interpretation thereof communicated to Daniel (14—23), who reveals it to the monarch (24—35), and interprets it of the four great monarchies. The head of gold represented the Babylonian empire (32); the breast and arms, which were of silver, represented the Medo-Persian empire (32, 39); the brazen belly and thighs represented the Macedo-Grecian empire (32, 39); the legs and feet, which were partly of iron and partly of clay, represented the Roman empire (33, 40—43), which would bruise and break to pieces every other kingdom, but in its last stage should be divided into ten smaller kingdoms, denoted by the ten toes of the image. The stone, "cut out of the mountain without hands, which brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold" (34, 35), represented the kingdom of the Messiah, which was "to fill the whole earth," become universal, and stand for ever (44, 45). This section concludes with an account of the promotion of Daniel and his friends to distinguished honour.

SECTION iii. An account of the miraculous preservation of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who, having refused to worship a golden image that had been set up by Nebuchadnezzar, were cast into a fiery furnace (iii).

* Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. x. c. 11. § 7.

SECTION iv. Nebuchadnezzar having been punished, on account of his pride, with the loss of his reason, and driven from the conversation of men, is restored to reason and to his throne; and by a public instrument proclaims to the world Daniel's interpretation of his dream, and extols the God of heaven (iv).

SECTION v. While Belshazzar is rioting in his palace, and profaning the sacred vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem, he is suddenly terrified with the figure of a hand inscribing certain words on the wall, which Daniel interprets. Belshazzar is slain, and the Babylonian empire is transferred to the Medes and Persians (v).

SECTION vi. Daniel being promoted to the highest office in the empire under Darius, a conspiracy is formed against him. The prophet, being in consequence cast into a den of lions, is miraculously preserved; and Darius publishes a decree that all men should glorify the God of Daniel (vi).

PART 2. comprizes various prophecies and visions of things future, until the advent and death of the Messiah, and the ultimate conversion of the Jews and Gentiles to the faith of the Gospel, in three sections (ch. vi—xii).

SECTION i. The vision of the four beasts concerning the four great monarchies of the world: it was delivered about forty-eight years after Nebuchadnezzar's dream related in ch. ii., but with some different circumstances. The first beast (4) represented the Babylonian empire; the second (5), the Medo-Persian empire; the third (6), the Macedo-Grecian empire; and the fourth (7), the Roman empire. The ten horns of this beast denote ten kingdoms or principalities which arose out of it, and were signified by the ten toes of the image (ii. 41, 42). These ten kingdoms or principalities are variously enumerated by different writers, who have supported their respective hypotheses with great learning and ingenuity, for which we must refer the reader to their works. The following table however will exhibit the result of their elaborate researches.

	Machiavel.*	Mede.†	Bishop Lloyd ‡ and Dr. Hales. §	Sir Isaac Newton.	Bishop Newton. **
1. The first horn.	The Ostrogoths in Mæsia.	The Britons.	The Huns, A. D. 356.	Vandals and Alans in Spain and Africa.	The senate of Rome, who revolted from the Greek emperors, and claimed the privilege of choosing a new emperor.
2. The second horn.	The Visigoths in Pannonia.	The Saxons in Britain.	Ostrogoths, 377.	The Suevians in Spain.	The Greeks in Ravenna.
3. The third horn.	The Sueves and Alans in Gascoigne and Spain.	The Franks.	Visigoths, 378.	The Visigoths.	The Lombards in Lombardy.
4. The fourth horn.	The Vandals in Africa.	The Burgundians in France.	Franks, 407.	The Alans in Gallia.	The Huns in Hungary.
5. The fifth horn.	The Franks in France.	The Visigoths in the south of France and part of Spain.	Vandals, 407.	The Burgundians.	The Alemanni in Germany.
6. The sixth horn.	The Burgundians in Burgundy.	The Sueves and Alans in Galicia and Portugal.	Sueves and Alans, 407.	The Franks.	The Franks in France.
7. The seventh horn.	The Heruli and Thuringi in Italy.	The Vandals in Africa.	Burgundians, 407.	The Britons.	Burgundians in Burgundy.
8. The eighth horn.	The Saxons and Angles in Britain.	The Alemanni in Germany.	The Herules, Rugians, and Thuringians, 476.	The Huns.	The Goths in Spain.
9. The ninth horn.	The Huns in Hungary.	The Ostrogoths, who were succeeded by the Lombards in Pannonia, and afterwards in Italy.	The Saxons, 476.	The Lombards.	The Britons.
10. The tenth horn.	The Lombards, first upon the Danube, and afterwards in Italy.	The Greeks in the residue of the empire.	The Longobardi in Hungary, 536; who were seated in the northern parts of Germany about 483.	The kingdom of Ravenna.	The Saxons in Britain.

* Hist Flor. lib. I.

† Works, p. 661.

§ Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book i. pp. 536—538.

|| On Daniel, ch. vi. p. 47.

‡ In Lowth's Commentary on the Prophets, pp. 381, 382.

** Dissertations on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 267.

The number of these kingdoms was not constantly ten, there being sometimes more and sometimes fewer; but, Sir Isaac Newton observes, whatever was their number afterwards, they are still called the *ten kings* from their first number. Besides these ten horns or kingdoms, there was to spring up another little horn (vii. 8. 24) which Grotius and others have erroneously applied to Antiochus Epiphanes; but which is generally conceived to denote the pope of Rome, whose power as a horn or temporal prince was established in the eighth century. All the kingdoms, above described, will be succeeded by the kingdom of Messiah (9—13. 27).

SECTION ii. In Daniel's vision of the ram and the he-goat is foretold the destruction of the Medo-Persian empire (typified by the ram, which was the armorial ensign of the Persian empire), by the Greeks or Macedonians under Alexander, represented by the he-goat; because the Macedonians, at first, about two hundred years before Daniel, were denominated *Ægeadæ*, or the goat's people, as their first seat was called *Ægeæ* or *Ægæ*, or goat's town, a goat being their ensign (viii. 1—7. 20—22). The four "notable" horns, that sprang up on the fracture of the great horn (8, 23), denote the four kingdoms of Greece, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt, erected by Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy. The little horn, which is described as rising among the four horns of the Grecian empire (9—12, 23, 24), is by many Jewish and Christian commentators understood to mean Antiochus Epiphanes, to which hypothesis Mr. Wintle inclines; but Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, and Dr. Hales, have clearly shown that the Roman temporal power, and no other, is intended: for, although some of the particulars may agree very well with that king, yet others can by no means be reconciled to him; while all of them agree and correspond exactly with the Romans, and with no other power whatever: it was the Roman power that destroyed the polity and temple of the Jews, and left the nation and holy city in that desolate state in which they are to remain to the end of two thousand three hundred prophetic days, that is, years (13, 14. 24, 25, 26). The distress of Daniel (17. 27), on learning the great and lasting calamities that were to befall his nation, represents him in a very amiable light both as a patriot and as a prophet, and gives an additional lustre to his glory and exalted character.

SECTION iii. While Daniel, understanding from the prophecies of Jeremiah (compare Jer. xxv. 11, 12. xxix. 10) that the seventy years' captivity was now drawing to a close (Dan. ix. 1, 2), was engaged in fasting and prayer for the restoration of Jerusalem (3—19), the angel Gabriel is sent to him (20—23). He announces to the prophet that the holy city should be rebuilt and peopled, and should continue so for seventy (prophetic) weeks, or four hundred and ninety years; at the expiration of which it should be utterly destroyed for putting the Messiah to death (25—27). The commencement of this period is fixed (25) to the time when the order was issued for rebuilding the temple in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes (Ezra vii. 11). Seven weeks, or forty-nine years, was the temple in building (Dan. ix. 25); sixty-two weeks, or four hundred and thirty-four years more, bring us to the public manifestation of the Messiah, at the beginning of John the Baptist's preaching; and one prophetic week, or seven years, added to this, will bring us to the time of our Saviour's passion, or the thirty-third year of the Christian æra—in all four hundred and ninety years, according to the prophecy. The latter part of the prediction (27) relates to the subversion of the Jewish temple and polity, and the second coming of the Messiah. *

SECTION iii. contains Daniel's fourth and last prophetic vision, in the third year of the reign of Cyrus, in which he is informed of various particulars concerning the Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires, and the kingdom of the Messiah (x—xii).

An introductory narrative states the occasion of the vision, viz. Daniel's fasting and supplication (probably on account of the obstruction of the building of the temple †; and describes the glorious person who appeared to the prophet (Dan. x. 1—21. xi. 1). The prediction then describes the fate of the Persian empire (xi. 2), whose fourth king, Xerxes, was attacked, and his empire destroyed, by Alexander (3); the partition of his vast dominions into four kingdoms (4); and the wars between the kingdoms of Egypt (which lay to the north of Judea) and of Syria

* Of this illustrious prophecy, which Sir Isaac Newton has justly pronounced to be the foundation of the Christian religion, Dr. Hales has given some chronological computations, slightly differing from the above. See his *Analysis*, vol. ii. pp. 559, *et seq.*

† See Ezra iv. 4, 5.

(which lay to the south of the Holy Land) are then foretold, together with the conquest of Macedon by the Romans (5—36). The prophecy then declares the tyranny of the papal Antichrist, which was to spring up under the Roman empire (36—39), and the invasions of the Saracens (from the south) and of the Turks (from the north) in the *time of the end*, or latter days of the Roman monarchy (40—45). This prophetic vision concludes with foretelling the general resurrection (xii. 1—4), and with announcing the time when all these great events were to have their final consummation, when the Jews were to be restored, Antichrist destroyed, the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, and the millenium, or reign of saints, was to begin (5—13). But the exact period, until PROVIDENCE shall open more of the seals*, cannot be fully ascertained.

Upon the whole, we may observe with Bishop Newton †, what an amazing prophecy is this, comprehending so many various events, and extending through so many successive ages, from the first establishment of the Persian empire, upwards of 530 years before Christ, to the general resurrection! What a proof of a Divine Providence, and of a Divine Revelation! for who could thus declare the things that shall be, with their times and seasons, but HE only who hath them in his power; whose dominion is over all, and whose kingdom endureth from generation to generation!

III. Of all the old Prophets, Daniel is the most distinct in the order of time, and easiest to be understood; and on this account, Sir Isaac Newton observes ‡, in those events which concern the last times, he must be the interpreter of the rest. All his predictions relate to each other, as if they were several parts of one general prophecy. The first is the easiest to be understood, and every succeeding prophecy adds something to the former. Though his style is not so lofty and figurative as that of the other prophets, it is more suitable to his subject, being clear and concise; his narratives and descriptions are simple and natural; and, in short, he writes more like an historian than a prophet.

Of the genuineness and authenticity of the book of Daniel we have every possible evidence, both external and internal.

* The reader, who is desirous of studying what has been written on this subject, is referred to the writings of Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, Mr. Faber, Mr. Frere, and Dr. Hales, who have collected a great variety of important information on the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecies.

† Dissertations on Prophecy, vol. i. pp. 413, 414.

‡ On Daniel, p. 15.

1. With regard to the *external evidence*, we have not only the general testimony of the whole Jewish church and nation, which have constantly received this book as canonical; but we have the particular testimony of Josephus, who (we have seen) commends Daniel as the greatest of prophets; of the Jewish Targums and Talmuds, which frequently quote and appeal to his authority; of JESUS CHRIST himself, who has cited his words, and has styled him "Daniel the prophet" (compare Dan. ix. 26, 27. with Matt. xxiv. 15. and Mark xiii. 14); and likewise of the apostle Paul, who has frequently quoted or alluded to him (compare Dan. iii. 23—25. and vii. 22. with Heb. xi. 33, 34. and Dan. xi. 36. with 2 Thess. ii. 4), as also of Saint John, whose Revelation derives great light from being compared with the predictions of Daniel. To these testimonies we may add that of Ezekiel, a contemporary writer, who greatly extols his exemplary piety and singular wisdom (Ezek. xiv. 14. 20. xxviii. 3), and also the testimony of antient profane historians, who relate many of the same transactions. *

2. The *internal evidence* is not less convincing; for the language, style, and manner of writing, are all perfectly agreeable to that age, and prove that it was written about the time of the Babylonish captivity. Part of the book, viz. from the fourth verse of the second chapter to the end of the seventh chapter, was originally written in the Chaldee language, because that portion treats of the Chaldean or Babylonish affairs; the rest of the book is pure Hebrew. But the most satisfactory evidence is the exact accomplishment of Daniel's prophecies, as well those which have been already fulfilled, as those which are now fulfilling in the world. So clear and explicit indeed are his predictions concerning the advent of the Messiah, and other important events, of times far remote from those in which he lived, that Porphyry †, a learned adversary of the Christian faith in the third century,—finding that Daniel's predictions concerning the several empires were so universally acknowledged to be fulfilled, that he could not disprove the fact of their accomplishment,—alleged against them that they must have been written after the events, to which they refer, had actually

* The most important of these testimonies are collected by the writers referred to in the preceding page.

† Porphyry seems to have been the first who impugned the genuineness and authority of Daniel's writings, in the twelfth of his fifteen books against the Christians. Dr. Lardner has collected such of his objections as are extant, together with Jerome's answers to them. Jewish and Heathen Testimonies, chap. xxxvii. (Works, vol. viii. pp. 185—204. 8vo. Edit. Methodius, Eusebius, and Apollinarius, also wrote answers to Porphyry, which have long since perished.

occurred. To him they appeared to be a narration of events that had already taken place, rather than a prediction of things future; such was the striking coincidence between the facts when accomplished, and the prophecies which foretold them. And he further affirmed that they were not composed by Daniel, whose name they bore, but by some person who lived in Judea about the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; because all the prophecies to that time contained true history, but all beyond that period were manifestly false. But this method of opposing the prophecies, as Jerome has rightly observed *, affords the strongest testimony to their truth: for they were fulfilled with such exactness, that, to infidels, the prophet seemed not to have foretold things future, but to have related things past. With respect to the particular prophecy (Dan. xi.) relating to the kings of Syria and Egypt, which Porphyry affirmed was written *after* the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, we may remark that the book of Daniel was translated into the Greek language one hundred years *before* he lived; and that very translation was in the hands of the Egyptians, who did not cherish any great kindness towards the Jews and their religion: and those prophecies which foretold the successes of Alexander (Dan. viii. 5. xi. 3.) were shown to him by the Jews, in consequence of which he conferred upon them several privileges.

IV. In the Vulgate Latin edition of the Bible, as well as in Theodotion's Greek version, which was adopted by all the Greek churches in the East in lieu of the incorrect Septuagint translation above alluded to, there is added in the third chapter of Daniel, between the twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses, the song of the three children, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, who were cast into the fiery furnace; and, at the end of the book, the history of Susanna and the story of Bel and the Dragon are inserted as the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters. But these additions were never received into the canon of Holy Writ by the Jewish church; neither are they extant in the Hebrew or Chaldee languages, nor is there any evidence that they ever were so extant. The occurrence of Hebraisms in them proves nothing more than that they were written by a Hebrew in the Greek tongue, into which he transferred the idioms of his own language: and that they were thus originally written in Greek by some Hellenistic Jew, without having any higher source whence they could be derived, is evident from this circumstance, that, in the history of Susanna, Daniel, in

* Præf. ad Danielelem, et Proëm. ad Comment. in Daniel.

his replies to the elders, alludes to the *Greek* names of the trees, under which, they said, the adultery charged upon Susanna was committed, which allusions cannot hold good in any other language *. The church of Rome, however, allows these spurious additions to be of the same authority with the rest of the book of Daniel; and, by a decree of the fourth session of the council of Trent, has given them an equal place in the canonical Scriptures. But they were never recognized as part of the sacred volume by the antient fathers of the Christian church. Africanus, Eusebius, and Apollinarius rejected these pieces, not only as being uncanonical, but also as fabulous: and Jerome, who has been followed by Erasmus and other modern writers, has given the history of Bel and the Dragon no better title than that of "*The Fables of Bel and the Dragon.*" And others, who have admitted them for instruction of manners, have nevertheless rejected them from the canonical Scriptures; in which conduct they have been followed by the Protestant churches, who exclude them from the canonical, and assign them to the apocryphal writings. †

* In the examination of the elders, when one of them said he saw the crime committed, *υπο σχινον*, under a mastich-tree, Daniel is represented as answering, in allusion to *σχινον*, "The angel of God hath received sentence of God, ΣΧΙΣΑΙ σε μεσον, to cut thee in two." And when the other elder said that it was *υπο περινον*, under a holm-tree, Daniel is made to answer, in allusion to the word *περινον*, "The angel of the Lord waiteth with the sword, ΠΡΙΣΑΙ σε μεσον, to cut thee in two." Jerome, *ut supra*.

† Dr. Prideaux's *Connexion*, part i. book iii. *sub anno* 534. vol. i. pp. 164, 165. edit. 1720. Calmet's *Dictionary*, voce *Daniel*, and his *Préface sur Daniel*, *Comm. Litt.* tom. vi. pp. 609—612. The fullest vindication of the genuineness and canonical authority of the prophecies of Daniel is to be found in Bishop Chandler's "*Vindication of the Defence of Christianity, from the Prophecies of the Old Testament,*" and in Dr. Samuel Chandler's "*Vindication of the Antiquity and Authority of Daniel's Prophecies,*" both published at London in 1728, in 8vo.

SECTION V.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET OBADIAH.

I. *Author and date*; — II. *Synopsis of its contents.*

BEFORE CHRIST, 588---583.

I. **THE** time when this prophet flourished, is wholly uncertain. Jerome, with the Jews, is of opinion that he was the same person who was governor of Ahab's house, and who hid and fed one hundred prophets whom Jezebel would have destroyed. Some other critics think that he was the Obadiah,

whom Josiah constituted overseer of the works of the temple, mentioned in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12. Dupin refers him to the time of Ahaz, in whose reign the Edomites, in conjunction with the Israelites, made war against the tribe of Judah; because his prophecy is almost wholly directed against the Edomites or Idumeans. Grotius, Huet, Dr. Lightfoot, and other commentators, however, make him to be contemporary with Hosea, Joel, and Amos, agreeably to the rule of the Jewish writers, viz. that, where the time of the prophet is not expressed, his predictions are to be placed in the same chronological order as the prophecy immediately preceding. Archbishop Newcome, with great probability, supposes that Obadiah prophesied between the taking of Jerusalem (which happened in the year 587 before Christ) and the destruction of Idumea by Nebuchadnezzar, which took place a very few years after. Consequently he was partly contemporary with Jeremiah, one of whose predictions includes the greater part of Obadiah's book. (Compare Obad. 1—9. with Jer. xlix. 14, 15, 16. 7. 9. 10). His writings, which consist of only one chapter, are composed with much beauty, and unfold a very interesting scene of prophecy.

II. The prophecy of Obadiah consists of two parts; in the first, which is *minatory*, is denounced the destruction of Edom for their pride and carnal security (1—9), and for their cruel insults and enmity to the Jews, after the capture of their city (10—16). This prediction, according to Archbishop Usher, was fulfilled, about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, by the Babylonians subduing and expelling them from Arabia Petræa, of which they never afterwards recovered possession. The latter part of this prophecy is consolatory, and foretells the restoration of the Jews (17), their victory over their enemies, and their flourishing state in consequence (18—21). Archbishop Newcome considers this prophecy as fulfilled by the conquests of the Maccabees over the Edomites. (See 1 Macc. v. 3—5. 65, &c.) There is no doubt that it was in part accomplished by the return from the Babylonian captivity, and by the victories of the Maccabean princes; but the prediction in the last verse will not receive its complete fulfilment until that time when “the kingdoms of the world are become *the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*” (Rev. xi. 15).

SECTION V.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

- I. *Author and date*;—II. *Canonical authority of the prophecies of Ezekiel*;—
III. *Their scope*;—IV. *Analysis of them*;—V. *Observations on the style of Ezekiel*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 595—536.

I. **EZEKIEL**, whose name imports the *strength of God*, was the son of Buzi, of the sacerdotal race, and one of the captives carried by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon, with Jehoiachin king of Judah: it does not appear that he had prophesied before he came into Mesopotamia. The principal scene of his predictions was some place on the river Chebar, which flows into the Euphrates about two hundred miles to the north of Babylon, where the prophet resided; though he was, occasionally, conveyed in vision to Jerusalem. He commenced his prophetic ministry in the thirtieth year of his age, according to general accounts; or rather, as Calmet thinks, in the thirtieth year after the covenant was renewed with God in the reign of Josiah, which answers to the fifth year of Ezekiel's and Jehoiachin's captivity (Ezek. i. 1. xl. 1), the æra whence he dates his predictions; and he continued to prophesy about twenty or twenty-one years. The events of his life, after his call to the prophetic office, are interwoven with the detail which he has himself given of his predictions: but the manner of its termination is nowhere ascertained. The Pseudo-Epiphanius, in his *lives of the prophets*, says that he was put to death by the prince or commander of the Jews in the place of his exile, because this prince was addicted to idolatry, and could not bear the reproaches of the prophet. No reliance, however, can be placed on this account, which is intermixed with many fables. Jerome is of opinion, that, as Ezekiel was in part contemporary with Jeremiah, who prophesied in Judea while Ezekiel delivered his predictions beyond the Euphrates, their prophecies were interchanged for the consolation and encouragement of the captive Jews. There is, indeed, a striking agreement between the subject-matter of their respective prophecies; but Ezekiel is more vehement than Jeremiah in reproofing the sins of his countrymen, and abounds more in visions, which render some passages of his book exceedingly difficult to be understood. On this account no Jew was, antiently, permitted to read the

writings of this prophet, until he had completed his thirtieth year. *

II. The prophecies of Ezekiel have always been acknowledged to be canonical, nor was it ever disputed that he was their author. Yet the Jews say that the sanhedrim deliberated for a long time whether his book should form a part of the sacred canon. They objected to the great obscurity at the beginning and end of his prophecy; and to what he says in ch. xviii. 20, that the son should not bear the iniquity of his father, which they urged was contrary to Moses, who says (Exod. xx. 5), that God visits the “sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation*.” But it is worthy of remark, that Moses himself (Deut. xxiv. 16.) says the very same thing as Ezekiel.† Respecting the declaration in Exod. xx. 5. see Vol. I. p. 472.

Josephus ascribes to this prophet two books concerning the Babylonian captivity‡; and says that, having foretold the ruin of the temple, and that Zedekiah should not see Babylon, he sent this writing to Jerusalem.§ But these circumstances are not recorded in the predictions now extant, nor have we any means of ascertaining what foundation Josephus had for his assertion. Most commentators are of opinion that the Jewish historian divided the prophecy we now have into two books, and that he took that part of the prophecy, which contains a description of the temple (xli—xlvi), for a distinct book, because it treats on a subject wholly different from the topics discussed in the former part of his writings.

III. The chief design of Ezekiel’s prophecies is, to comfort his brethren in captivity, who deplored their having too lightly credited the promises of Jeremiah, who had exhorted them speedily to submit to the Chaldees, on account of the approaching ruin of Jerusalem. As these captives saw no appearance of the fulfilment of Jeremiah’s predictions, God raised up Ezekiel to confirm them in the faith, and to support by new prophecies those which Jeremiah had long before published, and even then continued to announce in Judea. In pursuance of this design, Ezekiel predicts the dreadful calamities which soon after were inflicted upon Judea and Jerusalem, on account of the idolatry, impiety, and profligacy of their in-

* Hieronymi Proœm. in lib. 1. Comm. in Ezech.

† Calmet, Preface sur Ezekiel. Comment. Litt. tom. vi. pp. 353, 354.

‡ Antiq. Jud. lib. x. c. 6. § Ibid. lib. x. c. 10.

habitants; the divine judgments that would be executed on the false prophets and prophetesses who deluded and hardened the Jews in their rebellion against God; the punishments that awaited the Ammonites, Edomites, and Philistines, for their hatred of the Jews, and insulting them in their distress; the destruction of Tyre; the conquest of Egypt; the future restoration of Israel and Judah from their several dispersions; and their ultimately happy state after the advent and under the government of the Messiah.

IV. The prophecies of Ezekiel form, in our Bibles, forty-eight chapters; and, as he is extremely punctual in dating them, we have little or no difficulty in arranging them in chronological order. They may be divided into four parts, viz.

PART 1. Ezekiel's call to the prophetic office (i. 1. to the first part of verse 28), his commission, instructions and encouragements for executing it (i. 28. latter clause, ii. iii. 1—21).

PART 2. Denunciations against the Jewish people (iii. 22—27. iv—xxiv).

SECTION 1. In a glorious vision, under the type of a siege portrayed on a tile or slate, is represented the siege of Jerusalem (iii. 22—27. iv. 1—3); and by the prophet's lying on his left side 390 days, and on his right side 40 days, are prefigured the number of years (390) during which God endured the idolatrous practices of the ten tribes, and also the number of years (40) during which he bore with the enormous sins of Judah, from the solemn renewal of the covenant with Jehovah to the destruction of Jerusalem (4—8). The scanty supply of ill-prepared food allowed to the prophet during his symbolical siege represented the severity of the famine endured by the Jews while Jerusalem was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar.

SECTION 2. Under the type of shaving and burning his own hair (v. 1—4), Ezekiel denounces the divine judgments against Jerusalem, for her repeated provocations, by famine, sword, and dispersion (5—17).

SECTION 3. denounces the judgments of God against the Jews for their idolatry (vi. 1—7), but promises that a remnant shall be saved, and shall be brought to a sense of their sins by their afflictions (8—14).

SECTION 4. Predicts the final desolation of the land of Israel or Judah (which names, after the captivity of the ten tribes, are often used indiscriminately for the Jews in general) on account of the sins of the people (vii. 1—15); the great distress of the remnant that should escape (16—

19); the pollution and destruction of the temple itself (20—22): and the severity of their captivity, which is prefigured by a chain (23—27).

SECTION 5. describes the carrying of the prophet, in a vision, to Jerusalem (viii. 1—4), where he is shown the idolatries committed by the Jewish elders and people in the temple; particularly the image of Baal, by a bold figure called the *image of Jealousy*, from the provocation it gave to God (5); the Egyptian (6—12), the Phenician (13, 14), and the Persian superstitions (15, 16).* The prophet then denounces vengeance against the wicked, and foretells the preservation of the pious Jews (ix. 17, 18); and, under the command to scatter coals of fire over the city (x. 1—7), and the vision of the Shechinah departing from the temple (8—22), are prefigured the destruction of Jerusalem, and Jehovah's forsaking the temple. This section concludes with a severe denunciation against those wicked princes and people who remained in Jerusalem, and derided the types and predictions of the prophets (1—13); the return of the Jews is then foretold (14—21); Jehovah's forsaking the city is represented by the departure of the Shechinah (22—23); and the prophet returns to communicate his instructions to his brethren of the captivity (24—25).

SECTION 6. Under the types of Ezekiel's removing himself and his household goods (xii. 1—7), and eating and drinking "with quaking, and with carefulness" (17—20), is foretold the captivity of Zedekiah and of the Jews still remaining at Jerusalem (8—16)†; and speedy judgment is denounced against the Jews for their abuse of the divine forbearance (21—28).

SECTION 7. Contains a severe reproof and denunciation against the false prophets (xiii. 1—16), and false prophetesses (17—23).

* Bishop Warburton has an excellent illustration of this prediction in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, book iv. sect. 6.—(Works, vol. iv. pp. 295—300.)

† Josephus informs us that Zedekiah, thinking the prophecy of Ezekiel in the thirteenth verse of this chapter (that he should be brought to Babylon, which however he should not see, though he should die there) inconsistent with the prediction of Jeremiah (xxxii. 4. and xxxiv. 3.) that the Jewish king should see the eyes of the king of Babylon,—determined to give no credit to either of them. Both prophecies were literally fulfilled, and the event convinced him that they were not irreconcilable. Zedekiah did see the eyes of the king of Babylon, not at Babylon, but at Riblah. His eyes were there put out, and he was carried to Babylon, yet he did not behold that city. Compare Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* lib. x. c. 8. § 2. with 2 Kings xxv. 4—7. and Jer. lii. 8—11.

SECTION 8. A denunciation of the divine judgments against the idolatrous elders and their false prophets (xiv. 1—11), and against the Jews for their obstinate impenitency (12—21); a remnant of whom, it is promised, shall be saved (22—23).

SECTION 9. Under the parable of an unfruitful and unprofitable vine is set forth the utter rejection of Jerusalem (xv).

SECTION 10. describes the mercy of God towards the church and nation of the Jews (here represented by Jerusalem) under the emblem of a person that should take an exposed infant, bring her up with great tenderness, and afterwards marry her (xvi. 1—14). They are then upbraided (under the figure of a woman who proves false to a tender and indulgent husband) with their monstrous ingratitude in departing from his worship, and polluting themselves with heathen idolatries (15—34). But, notwithstanding all these provocations, God promises in the end to show them mercy under his new and everlasting covenant (44—63). The figurative mode of describing adultery, which is of frequent occurrence in the prophets, is pursued with great force, and at considerable length, both in this and the 23d chapter.

SECTION 11. Under the allegory of two eagles and a vine, the prophet figuratively expresses the carrying away of Jehoiakim into captivity by the king of Babylon (the first eagle), who made Zedekiah king in his stead. Zedekiah afterwards revolting from the Babylonian monarch, whose vassal he was, and making an alliance with the king of Egypt (the other eagle), God threatens him with captivity to the king from whom he had revolted (xvii. 1—21). The preaching of the Gospel, and the universal kingdom of the Messiah, are foretold (22—24).

SECTION 12. The Jews, in Ezekiel's time, having complained (xviii. 1, 2.) that God dealt hardly with them in punishing them for the sins of their forefathers, this section of Ezekiel's prophecy contains a vindication of the divine equity, and shows that God punishes no one eternally for the sins of any other person (3—32.)

SECTION 13. Under the parable of a lion's whelps are foretold the cruelty and captivity of Jehoahaz, who was deposed by the king of Egypt*, and of Jehoiakim, who

* See 2 Kings xxiii. 33. and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 4.

was deposed by the king of Babylon * (xix. 1—9). And under the parable of a wasted vine are set forth the desolation and captivity of the whole Jewish people (10—14).

SECTION 14. A deputation of the elders having come to the prophet, in the seventh year of Jehoiakim's and his own captivity, to request him to ask counsel of God in the midst of their calamity, Ezekiel, by divine command, reminds them of God's mercies to them, and their idolatry and rebellions against him, from their departure out of Egypt to that very day (xx. 1—39). Yet, notwithstanding all their provocations, promises of mercy are held out, and their return from captivity is foretold (40—44).

SECTION 15. Under the emblem of a forest, doomed to be consumed by fire, is foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, termed the "forest of the south," because that city lay to the south of Chaldea, where the prophet then was (xx. 45—49.) And under the emblem of a sharp sword, is predicted the destruction of the Jews (xxi. 1—17), of Jerusalem (18—27), and of the Ammonites (28—32), by Nebuchadnezzar. The prophecy against the Ammonites was accomplished about five years after Jerusalem was destroyed.

SECTION 16. contains a recital of the sins committed in Jerusalem, and by all orders and classes of people in it; for which the severest judgments are denounced (xxii).

SECTION 17. represents the idolatries of Samaria and Jerusalem by the lewd practices of two common harlots (xxiii. 1—21); for which crimes God denounces very severe judgments against them both (22—49).

SECTION 18. Under the figure of a boiling pot is shown the destruction of Jerusalem and its inhabitants (xxiv. 1—14); and, by the prophet's being forbidden to mourn for his wife, it is signified that the calamities of the Jews shall be so astonishing as to surpass all expressions of sorrow (15—27).

PART III. comprizes Ezekiel's prophecies against various neighbouring nations, enemies to the Jews (xxv—xxxii).

SECTION 1. denounces the judgments of God against the Ammonites (xxv. 1—7), Moabites (8—11), Edomites (12—14), and Philistines (15—17), on account of their hatred of his people, and insulting them in the time of their distress. According to Archbishop Usher and Jo-

* See 2 Kings xxiv. 2. and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6.

sephus, these predictions were fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem. *

SECTION 2. announces the destruction of Tyre (xxvi. xxvii. xxviii. 1—19.) in language singularly elegant and animated: the prophecy was fulfilled, nineteen years after it had been delivered, by Nebuchadnezzar, after a siege of thirteen years. The same calamity is foretold by Isaiah (xxiii). † The destruction of Sidon, the mother city of Tyre, is then declared (20—23); and this section of prophecy concludes with promises to the house of Israel of deliverance from all their enemies, together with their happy condition after their restoration from their several dispersions (24—26).

SECTION 3. The deposition and death of Pharaoh-Hophrah king of Egypt (xxix. 1—8), and the conquest of that country by Nebuchadnezzar (9—21. xxx—xxxii), are foretold. The imagery of the latter part of this prophecy is both sublime and terrible.

PART 4. contains a series of exhortations and consolatory promises to the Jews, of future deliverance under Cyrus, but principally of their final restoration and conversion under the kingdom of Messiah (xxxiii—xlvi).

SECTION 1. sets forth the duty of a prophet or minister of God, exemplified by that of a watchman, in warning a people of their sins (xxxiii. 1—9). Then follows an earnest exhortation to repentance, vindicating the equity of the divine government, and declaring the terms of acceptance (as in ch. xviii) to be without respect of persons; so that the ruin of obstinate and impenitent sinners, must be attributed to themselves (xxxiii. 10—20). While Ezekiel was thus under the prophetic impulse, tidings being brought to him of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (21—22), he takes occasion to predict the utter desolation of Judea, to check the vain confidence of those who still remained there, and he also reproves the hypocrisy of those Jews who were of the captivity (23—33).

* Usserii Annales. ad A. M. 3419. Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. x. c. 11. § 1.

† Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. x. c. 11. § 1. Though these predictions chiefly relate to Old Tyre, yet Dr. Prideaux is of opinion that they also comprehend New Tyre, which was erected on an island about half a mile distant from the shore, and which was conquered by Alexander the Great. Connexion, part i. book ii. sub anno 573, (vol. i. pp. 91, 92). The united testimonies of modern travellers concur in proving the literal accomplishment of Ezekiel's prophecy, that Tyre should be a place "to spread nets upon," and be "built no more," (xxvi. 14).

SECTION 2. In this section God reproves the conduct of the governors of the Jewish people (xxxiv. 1—10), and promises to take care of them himself, and bring them back from their dispersions to their own land, under the Messiah. The happiness of the people of God under his reign is described in the most beautiful terms (11—31). The latter part of this prophecy is yet unfulfilled.

SECTION 3. contains a renewal of the prophet's former denunciations against the Edomites (see xxv. 12), as a just punishment for their insults to the Jews during their calamities (xxxv). *

SECTION 4. announces the general restoration of the Jews, and their consequent felicity (xxxvi), which is described in the most energetic and beautiful terms. The same subject is further illustrated under the vision of a resurrection of dry bones (xxxvii. 1—14), which some critics and commentators consider as remotely alluding to the general resurrection: and under the emblem of the union of two sticks, is foretold the union of Israel and Judah into one state and church under the Messiah (15—28).

SECTION 5. contains a remarkable prophecy against Gog and all his allies, and the victory of Israel over them (xxxviii. xxxix. 1—22), together with a promise of deliverance from captivity, and of the final restoration and conversion of the Jews to the Gospel, under the Messiah (23—29). This prophecy relates to the latter ages of the world, and will be best understood by its accomplishment.

SECTION 6. “contains a representation, partly literal and partly mystical, of Solomon's temple; also a mystical representation of the city of Jerusalem, and mystical directions concerning the division of the Holy Land;—all which were designed to give the Jews a greater assurance of their returning into their own country from the Babylonish captivity; and, more remotely, of their return after their general conversion to Christianity, and of the lasting and firmly settled and prosperous state they shall then enjoy in their own country.” It seems that no model of Solomon's temple had remained. To direct the Jews, therefore, in the dimensions, parts, order, and regulations of the new temple, on their return from the Babylonish cap-

* This prophecy was accomplished in the conquest of the Edomites, first by the Nabatheans, and secondly by John Hyrcanus, who compelled them to embrace the Jewish religion; in consequence of which they at length became incorporated with that nation. Dr. Prideaux's *Connexion*, part ii. book v. *sub anno* 129, (vol. ii. pp. 307, 308).

tivity, is one reason why Ezekiel is so particular in his description of the old temple; to which the new was conformable in figure and parts, though inferior in magnificence, on account of the poverty of the nation at that time. Whatever was august or illustrious in the prophetic figures, and not literally fulfilled in or near their own times, the antient Jews justly considered as belonging to the times of the Messiah*. Accordingly, when they found that the second temple fell short, at least in their opinion, of the model of the temple described by Ezekiel, they supposed the prophecy to refer, at least in part, to the period now mentioned; and, doubtless, the temple and temple worship were a figure of Christ's church, frequently represented in the New Testament under the metaphor of a temple, in allusion to the beauty, symmetry, and firmness of that erected by Solomon, to its orderly worship, and to the manifestations of the divine presence there vouchsafed†. This section comprizes the last nine chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy.

Ch. xl. contains a description of the two outer courts, and of the chambers belonging to them (1—47), together with the porch of the temple (48).

Ch. xli. describes the measures, parts, and ornaments of the temple itself.

Ch. xlii. describes the priest's chambers and their use, and the dimensions of the holy mount on which the temple stood.

Ch. xliii. represents the glory of the Lord as returning to the temple, where God promises to fix his residence, if his people repent and forsake those sins which caused him to depart from them (1—11). The measures of the altar and the ordinances relating to it are set down (12—27).

Ch. xliv. describes the glory of God as actually returned to the temple, and reproves the Jews for suffering

* See particularly 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 20—22. 1 Tim. iii. 15. The same metaphor is also pursued in 2 Thess. ii. 4. and occurs repeatedly in the Revelation of St. John, who not only describes the heavenly sanctuary by representations taken from the Jewish temple (see Rev. xi. 19. xiv. 17. xv. 5. 8), but also transcribes several of Ezekiel's expressions (Rev. iv. 2, 3. 6. xi. 1, 2. xxi. 12, &c. xxii. 1, 2); and borrows his allusions from the state of the first temple, not of the second temple which existed in our Saviour's time; as if the former had a more immediate reference to the times of the Gospel. Compare Rev. iv. 1, &c. with Ezek. i. 6. *et seq.* —Lowth on Ezek. xl.

† Reeves and Lowth on Ezek. xl.

idolatrous priests to profane the temple with their ministrations (1—14). Ordinances are then given for the deportment of God's true priests, and the maintenance due to them (15—31).

Ch. xlv. appoints the several portions of land for the sanctuary and its ministers (1—5), for the city (6), and for the prince (7, 8); and institutes various ordinances concerning the provisions for the ordinary and extraordinary sacrifices (9—25. xlv. 1—15).

Ch. xlvi (16—24) gives directions concerning the inheriting of any part of the prince's portion, and also concerning the boiling and baking any part of the holy oblations.

Ch. xlvii. contains the vision of the holy waters issuing out of the temple, and their virtue (1—12); a most beautiful emblem of the gradual progress of the Gospel, and of the power of divine grace under it, which is capable of healing all but the incorrigibly impenitent and hypocrites; who, in verse 11, are compared to marshy ground, which, after all the care or culture that can be bestowed upon it, continues barren and unprofitable. The extent and division of the Holy Land are then described, which is to be indiscriminately shared between the Israelites and proselytes sojourning among them (13—23); mystically denoting the incorporation of the Gentiles into the same church with the Jews (compare Eph. iii. 6).

Ch. xlviii. comprizes a description of the several portions of land belonging to each tribe (1—7. 23—29); together with the portions allotted to the sanctuary (8—14), the city (15—19), and the prince (20—22); and also the measures and names of the gates of the new city (30—35).

V. Most biblical critics concur in opinion as to the excellence and sublimity of Ezekiel's style. Grotius * observes, that he possessed great erudition and genius; so that, setting aside his gift of prophecy which is incomparable, he may deserve to be compared with Homer, on account of his beautiful conceptions, his illustrious comparisons, and his extensive knowledge of various subjects, particularly of architecture. Bishop Lowth, in his twenty-first lecture on the sacred poetry of the Hebrews, gives us the following description of the peculiar and discrimi-

* Pref. ad Ezechiel. in Crit. Sacr. tom. iv. p. 8.

nating characteristics of this prophet. "Ezekiel," says he, "is much inferior to Jeremiah in elegance; in sublimity he is not even excelled by Isaiah: but his sublimity is of a totally different kind. He is deep, vehement, tragical; the only sensation he affects to excite is the terrible: his sentiments are elevated, fervid, full of fire, indignant; his imagery is crowded, magnificent, terrific, sometimes almost to disgust; his language is pompous, solemn, austere, rough, and at times unpolished: he employs frequent repetitions, not for the sake of grace or elegance, but from the vehemence of passion and indignation. Whatever subject he treats of, that he sedulously pursues, from that he rarely departs, but cleaves as it were to it; whence the connexion is in general evident and well preserved. In many respects he is perhaps excelled by the other prophets; but in that species of composition to which he seems by nature adapted, the forcible, the impetuous, the great and solemn, not one of the sacred writers is superior to him. His diction is sufficiently perspicuous, all his obscurity consists in the nature of the subject. Visions (as for instance among others, those of Hosea, Amos, and Jeremiah) are necessarily dark and confused. The greater part of Ezekiel, towards the middle of the book especially, is poetical, whether we regard the matter or the diction." His periods, however, are frequently so rude, that Bishop Lowth expresses himself as being often at a loss how to pronounce concerning his performance in this respect. In another place the same learned prelate remarks, that Ezekiel should be oftener classed among the orators than the poets; and he is of opinion that, with respect to style we may justly assign to Ezekiel the same rank among the Hebrews, as Homer, Simonides, and Æschylus hold among the Greeks.

From this high praise of Bishop Lowth's, his learned annotator, Michaelis, dissents; and is so far from esteeming Ezekiel as equal to Isaiah in sublimity, that he is disposed to think the prophet displays more art and luxuriance in amplifying and decorating his subject, than is consistent with poetical fervour, or indeed with true sublimity. Michaelis further pronounces Ezekiel to be in general an imitator, who possesses the art of giving an air of novelty and ingenuity, but not of grandeur and sublimity, to all his compositions; and is of opinion that, as the prophet lived at a period when the Hebrew language was visibly on the decline; and also that if we compare him with the Latin poets who succeeded the Augustan age, we may find some resemblance in the style, something that indicates the old age of poetry. In these sentiments the English translator of Bishop Lowth's lectures partially acquiesces, observing that

Ezekiel's fault is a want of neither novelty nor sublimity, but of grace and uniformity; while Eichorn minutely discusses his claims to originality. Archbishop Newcome, however, has completely vindicated the prophet's style. He observes, with equal truth and judgment, that Ezekiel is not to be considered as the framer of those august and astonishing visions, and of those admirable poetical representations which he committed to writing; but as an instrument in the hands of God, who vouchsafed to reveal himself, through a long succession of ages, not only in divers parts constituting a magnificent and uniform whole, but also in different manners, as by voice, by dreams, by inspiration, and by plain or enigmatical vision. If he is circumstantial in describing the wonderful scenes which were presented to him in the visions of God, he should be regarded as a faithful representer of the divine revelations, for the purpose of information and instruction, and not as exhausting an exuberant fancy in minutely filling up an ideal picture. The learned prelate thinks it probable that Buzi, the prophet's father, had preserved his own family from the taint of idolatry, and had educated his son for the priestly office in all the learning of the Hebrews, and particularly in the study of their sacred books. Being a youth at the time of his captivity—a season of life when the fervour of imagination is natural in men of superior endowments, his genius led him to amplification, like that of some of the Roman poets; though he occasionally shows himself capable of the austere and concise style of which the seventh chapter is a remarkable instance. But the Divine Spirit did not overrule the natural bent of his mind. Variety is thus produced in the sacred writings. Nahum sounds the trumpet of war; Hosea is sententious, Isaiah sublime, Jeremiah pathetic, Ezekiel copious. This diffuseness of manner in mild and affectionate exhortation, this vehement enlarging on the guilt and consequent sufferings of his countrymen, seems wisely adapted to their capacities and circumstances, and must have had a forcible tendency to awaken them from their lethargy. *

* Archbishop Newcome's Preface to his Translation of Ezekiel, pp. xxvii. xxviii. To justify the character above given, the learned prelate descends to particulars (which we have not room to specify), and gives apposite examples, not only of the *clear*, the *flowing*, and the *nervous*, but also of the sublime. He concludes his observations on the style of Ezekiel by stating it to be his deliberate opinion, that, if the prophets' "style is the old age of the Hebrew language and composition, it is a firm and vigorous one, and should induce us to trace its youth and manhood with the most assiduous attention." Ibid, pp. xxviii—lxii.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE PROPHETS WHO FLOURISHED AFTER THE RETURN OF THE JEWS FROM BABYLON.

SECTION I.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET HAGGAI.

I. *Author and date*; — II. *Argument and scope*; — III. *Analysis of its contents*; — IV. *Observations on its style*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 520—518.

I. NOTHING is certainly known concerning the tribe or birth-place of Haggai, the tenth in order of the minor prophets, but the first of the three who were commissioned to make known the divine will to the Jews after their return from captivity. The general opinion, founded on the assertion of the Pseudo-Epiphanius, is, that he was born at Babylon, and was one of the Jews who returned with Zerubbabel, in consequence of the edict of Cyrus. The same author affirms that he was buried at Jerusalem among the priests, whence some have conjectured that he was of the family of Aaron. The times of his predictions, however, are so distinctly marked by himself, that we have as much certainty on this point as we have with respect to any of the prophets.

II. The Jews, who were released from captivity in the first year of the reign of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1. *et seq.*), having returned to Jerusalem and commenced the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra ii. 1—4), were interrupted in their undertakings by the neighbouring satraps, who contrived to prejudice the Persian monarch (the Pseudo-Smerdis) against them (Ezra iv. 1. with 24) until the second year of Darius. Discouraged by these impediments, the people ceased, for fourteen years, to prosecute the erection of the second temple, as if the time were not yet come, and applied themselves to the building of their own houses: but God, disposing that sovereign to renew the decree of Cyrus, raised up the prophet Haggai about the year 520 before Christ; and, in consequence of his exhortations, they resumed the work, which was completed in a few years.

Further, in order to encourage them to proceed in this undertaking, the prophet assured them from God, that the glory of this latter house should far exceed the glory of the former.

III. The book of the prophet Haggai comprizes three distinct prophecies or discourses, viz.

DISCOURSE 1. contains a severe reproof of the people, especially of their governor and high-priest, for their delay in rebuilding the temple, which neglect was the cause of the unfruitful seasons, and other marks of the divine displeasure, with which they had been visited (i. 1—11). The obedience of the governors and people to the prophet's message is then related (12—15).

DISCOURSE 2. The prophet comforts the aged men, who when young had beheld the splendour of the first temple, and now wept for the diminished magnificence of the second temple, by foretelling that its glory should be greater than that of the first (ii. 1—9). This prediction was accomplished by Jesus Christ honouring it with his presence and preaching. Haggai then predicts a fruitful harvest, as a reward for carrying on the building (10—19).

DISCOURSE 3. The prophet foretells the setting up of Messiah's kingdom under the name of Zerubbabel (ii. 20—23).

IV. The style of this prophet is for the most part plain and prosaic, and vehement when he reproofs; it is, however, interspersed with passages of much sublimity and pathos when he treats of the advent of the Messiah, whom he emphatically terms "the desire of all nations."

SECTION II.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH.

I. *Author and date*; — II. *Analysis of its contents*; — III. *Observations on its style.*

BEFORE CHRIST, 520—518.

I. **ALTHOUGH** the names of Zechariah's father and grandfather are specified (Zech. i. 1), it is not known from what tribe or family this prophet was descended, nor where he was born; but that he was one of the captives who returned to Jerusalem in consequence of the decree of Cyrus, is unquestionable. As he opened his prophetic commission in the eighth month of the second year of Darius the son of Hystaspes, that is, about the year 520 before the Christian æra, it is evident that he was contemporary with Haggai, and his authority was equally effectual in promoting the building of the temple.

From an expression in ch. ii. 4, we have every reason to believe that Zechariah was called to the prophetic ministry when he was a young man.

II. The prophecy of Zechariah consists of two parts, the first of which concerns the events which were then taking place, viz. the restoration of the temple, interspersing predictions relative to the advent of the Messiah. The second part comprises prophecies relative to more remote events, particularly the coming of Jesus Christ, and the war of the Romans against the Jews.

PART 1. contains the prophecies delivered in the second year of Darius king of Persia (i—vi).

DISCOURSE 1. The Jews exhorted to repentance, and to go on with the building of the temple (i. 1—6), which it is predicted that Darius should permit (7—17); and that the Samaritans should be compelled to suspend their opposition to the building (18—21). Further, to encourage the Jews in their work, the prophet foretells the prosperity of Jerusalem (ii. 1—5), and admonishes the Jews to depart from Babylon before her destruction (6—9), promising them the divine presence (10—13). These promises, though partly fulfilled by the prosperity of the Jews under the Maccabees, remain to be still more fully accomplished after the restoration of the Jews, and their conversion to the Gospel.

DISCOURSE 2. The adversaries of the Jews having endeavoured to interrupt their work (Ezra v.), in order to encourage them, the restoration of the temple and its service is foretold under the vision of Joshua the high-priest, arrayed in new sacerdotal attire (iii. 1—7); whence by an easy transition the prophet proceeds to set forth the glory of Christ as the chief corner-stone of his church (8—10).

DISCOURSE 3. Under the vision of the golden candlestick and two olive-trees is typically represented the success of Zerubbabel and Joshua in rebuilding the temple, and restoring its service (iv).

DISCOURSE 4. Under the vision of a flying roll, the divine judgments are denounced against robbery and perjury (v. 1—4); and the Jews are threatened with a second captivity, if they continue in sin (5—11).

DISCOURSE 5. Under the vision of the four chariots, drawn by several sorts of horses, are represented the successions of the Babylonian, Persian, Macedo-Greek, and Roman empires (vi. 1—8): and by the two crowns placed upon the head of Joshua are set forth, primarily,

the re-establishment of the civil and religious polity of the Jews under Zerubbabel and Joshua; and, secondarily but principally, the high-priesthood and kingdom of Christ, here emphatically termed the *Branch* (9—15).

PART 2. Prophecies delivered in the fourth year of the reign of Darius.

DISCOURSE 1. Some Jews having been sent to Jerusalem from the exiles then at Babylon, to inquire of the priests and prophets whether they were still bound to observe the fasts that had been instituted on account of the destruction of Jerusalem, and which had been observed during the captivity (vii. 1—4.)—the prophet is commanded to take this occasion of enforcing upon them the weightier matters of the law, viz. judgment and mercy, lest the same calamities should befall them which had been inflicted upon their fathers for their neglect of those duties (4—14). In the event of their obedience, God promises the continuance of his favour (viii. 1—8); they are encouraged to go on with the building (9—17), and are permitted to discontinue the observance of the fasts which they had kept during the captivity (18—23).

DISCOURSE 2. contains predictions of the conquest of Syria, Phenicia, and Palestine, by Alexander the Great (ix. 1—7), and of the watchful providence of God over his temple in those troublesome times (8). Whence he takes occasion to describe, as in a parenthesis, the advent of Christ (9, 10. with Matt. xxi. 5. and John xii. 15); and then returning to his former subject, he announces the conquest of the Jews, particularly of the Maccabees, over the princes of the Grecian monarchy (11—17). Prosperity is further promised to the Jews (x. 1—3), and their victories over their enemies are again foretold (4—12). It is probable that this prophetic discourse remains to be fully accomplished in the final restoration of the Jews.

DISCOURSE 3. predicts the rejection of the Jews for their rejection of Christ, and valuing him and his labours at the base price of thirty pieces of silver (xi). This prediction was literally fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. (Compare Matt. xxvi. 14, 15. and xxvii. 3—10. with Zech. xi. 11—13).

DISCOURSE 4. comprizes a series of prophecies, relating principally to the latter times of the Gospel. The former part of it (xii. 1—9.) announces the preservation of Jerusalem against an invasion in the last ages of the world, which most commentators think is that of Gog and Magog,

more largely described in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel. The grief of the Jews, for their fathers having crucified the Messiah, on their conversion, is then foretold (10—14), as also the crucifixion itself, and the general conversion of the Jews (xiii). The destruction of the enemies, predicted at the beginning of this prophetic sermon, is again foretold (xiv. 1—15); and the prophecy concludes with announcing the final conversion of all nations to the Gospel, and the prosperity of the church (16—21).

III. Zechariah is the longest and most obscure of the twelve minor prophets. His style, like that of Haggai, is for the most part prosaic, though more obscure towards the beginning on account of his types and visions. Towards the close he is more plain, as well as more elevated and poetical. This difference in style has induced Mr. Mede, Dr. Hammond, and some other modern critics, to suppose that chapters ix. x. and xi. of this prophet were written by Jeremiah; because in Matt. xxvii. 9, 10. we find his name quoted instead of Zechariah's. And, as these three chapters form, in their opinion, but one prophetic discourse, they have concluded that they belonged to Jeremiah. As, however, the *language* of Zechariah corresponds with that of the age in which he lived, and incidental expressions show that he flourished after the captivity, it is most probable that the name of Jeremiah has slipped into the text of Saint Matthew through some mistake of the transcribers.

SECTION III.

ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET MALACHI.

I. *Author and date*;—II. *Occasion and scope of his prophecy*;—
III. *Analysis of its contents*.—IV. *Style*.

BEFORE CHRIST, 436—397.

I. **CONCERNING** Malachi, the last of the minor prophets (which name signifies *my angel* or *my messenger*), so little is known, that it has been doubted whether his name be a proper name, or only a generic name, signifying the angel of the Lord, a messenger, a prophet. From a comparison of Haggai (i. 13.) with Malachi (iii. 1), it appears that in these times the appellation of *Malach-Jehovah*, or the messenger of the Lord, was

given to the prophets. The Septuagint translators have rendered Malachi *his angel* instead of *my angel*, as the original imports; and several of the fathers have quoted Malachi under the name of the angel of the Lord. Origen entertained the extravagant notion, that Malachi was an angel incarnate sent from God. Calmet, after Jerome and some other antient writers, thinks that Malachi was the same person as Ezra, who wrote the canonical book that passes under his name, and was governor of the Jews after their return from the captivity. As he revised the Holy Scriptures, and collected the canon of the Old Testament, and performed various other important services to the Jewish church, Ezra has been considered, both by antient Jewish and also by the early Christian writers, as a very extraordinary person sent from God, and therefore they thought him very appropriately denominated Malachi; but for these opinions there is no foundation whatever.

It is certain that Malachi was a distinct person from Ezra, and (as Rosenmüller observes) the whole argument of his book proves that he flourished after the return from the captivity. He prophesied while Nehemiah was governor of Judea, more particularly after his second coming from the Persian court; and appears to have contributed the weight of his exhortations to the restoration of the Jewish polity, and the final reform established by that pious and excellent governor. Archbishop Newcome supposes Malachi to have flourished about the year 436 before the Christian æra; but Dr. Kennicott places him about the year 420 before Christ, which date is adopted by Dr. Hales, as sufficiently agreeing with the description of Josephus and the varying dates of chronologers.*

II. The Jews having rebuilt the temple, and re-established the worship of Jehovah, after the death of Zerubbabel and Joshua, relapsed into their former irreligion in consequence of the negligence of the priests. Although they were subsequently reformed during the governments of Ezra and Nehemiah, yet they fell into gross abuses after the death of Ezra, and during Nehemiah's absence at the court of Persia. The prophet Malachi was therefore commissioned to reprove the priests and people, more particularly after Nehemiah's second return, for their irreligious practices, and to invite them to repentance and reformation of life by promises of the great blessings that should be bestowed at the advent of the Messiah.

* Archbishop Newcome's Minor Prophets, p. xliii. Kennicott, *Dissertatio Generalis*, § 14. p. 6. Dr. Hales's *Analysis of Chronology*, vol. ii. p. 533.

III. The writings of Malachi, which consist of four chapters, comprize two distinct prophetic discourses, viz.

DISCOURSE 1. reminds the Jews of the special favours which God had bestowed upon them (i. 1—5), and reproves them for not showing due reverence to God (6—10), for which their rejection is threatened, and the calling of the Gentiles is announced (11). The divine judgments are threatened both against the people and the priests for their disrespect to God in their sacrifices (12—14. ii. 1—10), and also for their unlawful intermarriages with idolatresses, and divorcing even their legitimate wives (11—17).

DISCOURSE 2. foretells the coming of Christ, and his harbinger John the Baptist, to purify the sons of Levi, the priests, and to smite the land with a curse, unless they all repented. Reproofs are interspersed for withholding their tithes and other oblations, and also for their blasphemy; and the reward of the good, and the punishment of the wicked, are predicted (iii. iv. 1—3). The prophecy concludes with enjoining the strict observance of the law, till the forerunner already promised should appear in the spirit and power of Elijah, to introduce the Messiah, and commence a new and everlasting dispensation (4—6). ‘The great and terrible day of the Lord’ in verse 5. denotes the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans A. D. 70; though this expression may also be applied to the general dissolution of all things, agreeably to the usual mode of speaking among the prophets. Compare Isa. xiii. 9, 10.

IV. Although the writings of this prophet are almost wholly in prose, yet they are by no means destitute of force and elegance. He reproves the wickedness of his countrymen with great vehemence; and Bishop Lowth observes that his book is written in a kind of middle style, which seems to indicate that the Hebrew poetry, from the time of the Babylonish captivity, was in a declining state, and, being past its prime and vigour, was then fast verging towards the debility of age.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE APOCRYPHA.

I. *Derivation of the term Apocrypha*;—II. *The Apocryphal Books—why rejected from the Canon of Scripture*;—*their Uses*;—III. *Account of the First Book of Esdras*;—IV. *Of the Second Book of Esdras*;—V. *Of the Book of Tobit*;—VI. *Of the Book of Judith*;—VII. *Of the rest of the Chapters of Esther*;—VIII. *Of the Book of Wisdom*;—IX. *Of the Book of Ecclesiasticus*;—X. *Of Baruch*;—XI. *Of the Song of the Three Children*;—XII. *Of the History of Susanna*;—XIII. *Of Bel and the Dragon*;—XIV. *Of the Prayer of Manasses*;—XV. *Of the First Book of Maccabees*;—XVI. *Of the Second Book of Maccabees*.

I. BESIDES the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which are universally acknowledged to be genuine and inspired writings, both by the Jewish and Christian churches, there are several other writings, partly historical, partly ethical, and partly poetical, which are usually printed at the end of the Old Testament in the larger editions of the English Bible, under the appellation of the “APOCRYPHA”—that is, books not admitted into the sacred canon, being either spurious, or at least not acknowledged to be divine. The word Apocrypha is of Greek origin, and is either derived from the words *απο της κρυπτης*, because the books in question were removed from the crypt, chest, ark, or other receptacle in which the sacred books were deposited, whose authority was never doubted; or, more probably, from the verb *αποκρυπτω*, to hide or conceal, because they were concealed from the generality of readers, their authority not being recognized by the church, and because they are books which are destitute of proper testimonials, their original being obscure, their authors unknown, and their character either heretical or suspected. *

II. The Protestant churches not only account those books to be apocryphal and merely human compositions, which are

* Augustin contra Faustum, lib. xi. c. 2. De Civitate Dei, lib. xv. c. 23. § 4. The passages are given at length in Dr. Lardner's Works, vol. iii. p. 530.

esteemed such by the church of Rome, as the prayer of Manasseh, the third and fourth books of Esdras, the addition at the end of Job, and the hundred and fifty-first psalm; but also the books of Tobit, Judith, the additions to the book of Esther, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch the prophet, with the epistle of Jeremiah, the Song of the Three Children, the story of Susanna, the story of Bel and the Dragon, and the first and second books of Maccabees. The books here enumerated are unanimously rejected by Protestants for the following reasons:

1. *They possess no authority whatever, either external or internal, to procure their admission into the sacred canon.* None of them are extant in Hebrew; all of them are in the Greek language, except the fourth book of Esdras, which is only extant in Latin. They were all written subsequently to the cessation of the prophetic spirit*, though before the promulgation of the Gospel.† Not one of the writers in direct terms advances a claim to inspiration‡; nor were they ever received into the sacred canon by the Jewish church, and therefore they were not sanctioned by our Saviour. No part of the apocrypha is quoted, or even alluded to, by him or by any of his apostles; and both Philo and

* In the prophecy of Malachi (iv. 4—6) it is intimated that after him no prophet should arise, until John the Baptist, the harbinger of the Messiah, should appear in the spirit and power of Elijah; and the Jews unanimously agree that the prophetic spirit ceased with Malachi. The author of the book of Wisdom *pretends* that it was written by Solomon—a pretension not only manifestly false, but which also proves that book not to have been inspired. For, in the first place, the author, whoever he was, cites many passages from Isaiah and Jeremiah, who did not prophesy till many ages *after* the time of Solomon, and consequently the book could not have been written by him; and, secondly, it represents the Israelites (Wisd. ix. 7, 8. xv. 14.) as being in subjection to their enemies; whereas we know from the sacred writings, that they enjoyed great peace and prosperity during the reign of Solomon.

† Such at least is the general opinion of commentators; but Moldenhawer has urged strong reasons for thinking that some of the apocryphal books,—as Tobit, the fourth book of Esdras, and perhaps also the book of Wisdom,—were written *after* the birth of our Saviour, and consequently they cannot be considered as canonical books. His arguments are noticed in §§ iv. v. and viii. pp. 336, 327, 329. *infra*.

‡ So far, indeed, are the authors of the apocryphal books from asserting their own inspiration, that some of them say what amounts to an *acknowledgment that they were not inspired*. Thus, in the prologue to the book of Ecclesiasticus, the son of Sirach entreats the reader to pardon any errors he may have committed in translating the work of his grandfather Jesus into Greek. In 1 Mac. iv. 46. and ix. 27. it is confessed that there was at that time no prophet in Israel; the second book of Maccabees (ii. 23.) is an avowed abridgment of five books of Jason of Cyrene; and the author concludes with the following words, which are utterly unworthy of a person writing by inspiration. “If I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired, but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto,” (2 Macc. xv. 38). Dick’s Essay on the Inspiration of the Scriptures, p. 71.

Josephus, who flourished in the first century of the Christian æra, are totally silent concerning them. *

2. *The apocryphal books contain many things which are fabulous, contradictory to historical truth, and directly at variance with the canonical Scriptures.* To mention only a few instances out of many that might be adduced;—the story of Bel and the Dragon is, confessedly, a mere fiction;—and there are very strong grounds for concluding that the book of Judith is of the same description. The author of the book of Tobit has added to the views of God and Providence, delineated in the Old Testament, tenets of Babylonian or Assyrian origin, concerning demons or angels, intermediate beings between the Deity and man. And, lastly, the first and second books of Maccabees contradict each other: for, in the former (1 Macc. vi. 4—16), Antiochus Epiphanes is said to have died in Babylon; and in the latter he is represented, *first*, as having been slain by the priests in the temple of Nanea in Persia (2 Macc. i. 13—16), and *afterwards* as dying “a miserable death in a strange country among the mountains!” (ix. 28).

3. *The apocryphal books were not admitted into the canon of Scripture during the four first centuries of the Christian church.* They are not mentioned in the catalogue of inspired writings, made by Melito Bishop of Sardis, who flourished in

* The testimony of Josephus is very remarkable:—“We have not,” says he, “an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, but only twenty-two books, containing the records of all past times, which are justly believed to be divine. Five of them belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions concerning the origin of mankind, till his death. But as to the time from the death of Moses, till the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets who were after Moses wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life. Our history, indeed, has been written, since Artaxerxes, very particularly; but it has not been esteemed of equal authority with the former by our forefathers, because there had not been an exact succession of prophets since that time. And how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation, is evident by what we do: for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add any thing to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them; but it is become natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if it be necessary, willingly to die for them.” Josephus contra Apion, lib. i. § 8. Josephus’s testimony is related by Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. ix. and x.); and it is further worthy of remark, that the most learned of the Roman Catholic writers admit that the apocryphal books were never acknowledged by the Jewish church. See particularly Huet’s Demonstr. Evangelica, prop. iv. tom. i. De Libro Tobit, p. 306. De Libro Judith, p. 309. De Libris Machabæorum, p. 460. De Canone Librorum Sacrorum, p. 473. See also Dupin’s Dissertation Préliminaire ou Prolégomènes sur la Bible, pp. 85, 86, 89. 112. Amst. 1701.

the second century *, nor in those of Origen †, in the third century, of Athanasius ‡, Hilary §, Cyril of Jerusalem ||, Epiphanius **, Gregory Nazianen ††, Amphilochius ††, Jerome § §, Rufinus || ||, and others of the fourth century; nor in the catalogue of canonical books recognized by the council of Laodicea ***, held in the same century, whose canons were received by the Catholic church; so that, as Bishop Burnet well observes, “we have the concurring sense of the whole church of God in this matter.” ††† To this decisive evidence against the canonical authority of the apocryphal books, we may add that they were never read in the Christian church until the fourth century; when, as Jerome informs us, they were read “for example of life and instruction of manners, but were not applied to establish any doctrine;” ††† and contemporary writers § § § state, that although they were not approved as canonical or inspired writings, yet some of them, particularly Judith, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus, were allowed to be perused by catechumens. As a proof that they were not regarded as canonical in the fifth century, Augustine relates, that when the book of Wisdom and other writings of the same class were publicly read in the church, they were given to the readers or inferior ecclesiastical officers, who read them in a lower place than those which were universally acknowledged to be canonical, which were read by the bishops and presbyters in a more eminent and conspicuous manner. || || || To conclude: notwithstanding the veneration in

* This catalogue is inserted by Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History, lib. iv. c. 26.

† Ibid. lib. vi. c. 25.

‡ In his Festal or Paschal Epistle. See the extract in Dr. Lardner's Works, vol. iv. pp. 282—285.

§ Prolog. in Psalmos, p. 9. Paris, 1693. Lardner, vol. iv. p. 305.

|| In his Fourth Catechetical Exercise. Ibid. p. 299.

** In various catalogues recited by Dr. Lardner, vol. iv. pp. 312, 313.

†† Carm. 33. Op. tom. ii. p. 98. Ibid. pp. 407, 408.

†† In Carmine Iambico ad Seleucum, p. 126. Ibid. p. 413.

§ § In Præfat. ad Libr. Regum sive Prologo Galeato. Lardner, vol. v. pp. 16, 17; and also in several of his prefaces to other books, which are given by Dr. L. pp. 18—22.

|| || Expositio ad Symb. Apost. Lardner, vol. v. pp. 75, 76.

*** Can. 59, 60. Lardner, vol. iv. pp. 308, 309. Besides Dr. Lardner, Bishop Cosin, in his Scholastical History of the Canon, and Moldenhawer (Introd. ad Vet. Test. pp. 148—154), have given extracts at length from the above-mentioned fathers, and others, against the authority of the apocryphal books.

††† On the Sixth Article of the Anglican church, p. 111. 6th edit.

††† Præf. in Libr. Salomonis. Op. tom. i. pp. 938, 939. Lardner, vol. v. p. 18.

§ § § The author of the Synopsis of Scripture attributed to Athanasius (see Lardner, vol. iv. p. 290), and also the pretended Apostolical Canons (Can. ult).

|| || || Augustin. de Predest. Sanct. lib. i. c. 14. in Bishop Cosin's Scholastical History of the Canon, p. 106.

which these books were held by the Western Church, it is evident that the same authority was never ascribed to them as to the Old and New Testament; until the last council of Trent, at its fourth session, presumed to place them all (excepting the prayer of Manasseh and the third and fourth books of Esdras) in the same rank with the inspired writings of Moses and the prophets. Although the apocryphal books cannot be applied "to establish any doctrine," yet "they are highly valuable as antient writings, which throw considerable light upon the phraseology of Scripture*, and upon the history and manners of the East: and as they contain many noble sentiments and useful precepts, the Anglican church, in imitation of the primitive church of Christ, doth read them for example of life and instruction of manners."†

III. It is not known at what time the FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS was written: it is only extant in Greek, and in the Alexandrian manuscript it is placed before the canonical book of Ezra, and is there called the first book of Ezra, because the events related in it occurred prior to the return from the Babylonish captivity. In some editions of the Septuagint it is called the *first book of the priest* (meaning Ezra), the authentic book of Ezra being called the second book. In the editions of the Latin Vulgate, previous to the council of Trent, this and the following book are styled the third and fourth books of Esdras, those of Esdras and Nehemiah being entitled the first and second books. The author of this book is not known; it is compiled from the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which however it contradicts in many instances. The first book of Esdras is chiefly historical, and gives an account of the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, the building of the temple, and the re-establishment of divine worship. The style of this

* Kuinöel has applied the apocryphal books to the illustration of the New Testament, with great success, in his *Observationes ad Novum Testamentum ex Libris Apocryphis* V. T. 8vo, Lipsiæ, 1794.

† It may be proper to remark that the Anglican church does not read all the books of the Apocrypha; it reads no part of either book of Esdras, or of the Maccabees, nor does it read the Song of the Three Children, nor the Prayer of Manasseh. Bishop Tomline's *Elements of Christ. Theol.* vol. ii. p. 199. Pfeiffer, *Critica Sacra*, cap. 14. Op. tom. ii. pp. 795—799. Moldenhawer, *Introd. ad Vet. Test.* pp. 145—155. Heidegger, *Enchirid. Biblicum*, pp. 305—322. See also Bishop Marsh's *Comparative View of the Churches of England and Rome*, pp. 78—98. And for a full account of the fragments and remains of the apocryphal books, see Fabricius's *Codex Pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti*, 8vo, 2 vols. Hamburg. 1722, 1723.

book is much purer than that of the greater part of the Septuagint version, and is said frequently to approach that of Symmachus, the most elegant of all the Greek translators of the Bible. Although this book is often cited by the fathers, it is rejected by Jerome as being spurious, and the church of Rome never recognized its canonical authority: it is not appointed to be read for lessons in the Anglican church. There is a Syriac version of this book extant.

IV. The SECOND BOOK OF ESDRAS is supposed to have been originally written in Greek, though at present it is only extant in Latin, of which there is an Arabic version, differing very materially from it, and having many interpolations. The author of this book is unknown; although he personates Ezra, it is manifest from the style and contents of his book that he lived long after that celebrated Jewish reformer. He pretends to visions and revelations, but is very ridiculous and absurd; he believed that the day of judgment was at hand, and that the souls of good and wicked men would all be delivered out of hell after after the day of judgment. Numerous rabbinical fables occur in this book, particularly the account of the six days' creation, and the story of Behemoth and Leviathan, two monstrous creatures that are designed as a feast for the elect after the day of resurrection, &c. He says that the ten tribes are gone away into a country which he calls Arsareth (xiii. 40—45), and that Ezra restored the whole body of the Scriptures, which had been entirely lost (xiv. 21). And he speaks of Jesus Christ and his apostles in so clear a manner, that the Gospel itself is scarcely more explicit. On these accounts, and from the numerous vestiges of the language of the New Testament, and especially of the Revelation of Saint John, which are discoverable in this book, Moldenhawer and some other critics conclude that it was written by some converted Jew, in the close of the first century, who assumed the name of Esdras or Ezra.

V. Concerning the author of the book of TOBIT, or the time when he flourished, we have no authentic information. It professes to relate the history of Tobit and his family, who were carried into captivity to Nineveh by Shalmanezar; but it contains so many rabbinical fables, and allusions to the Babylonian demonology, that many learned men consider it as an ingenious and amusing fiction, calculated to form a pious temper, and to teach the most important duties. From some apparent coincidences between this book and

some parts of the New Testament, Moldenhawer is disposed to refer it to the end of the first century: but Jahn and most other commentators and critics think it was written about 150 or 200 years before the birth of our Saviour. According to Jerome, who translated the book of Tobit into Latin, it was originally written in Chaldee by some Babylonian Jew. It was probably begun by Tobit, continued by his son Tobias, and finished by some other individual of the family; after which it was digested into the order in which we now have it. There is a Greek version of this book extant, much more antient than Jerome's Latin translation; for it is referred to by Polycarp, Clement of Alexandria, and other fathers, who lived long before the time of Jerome. From this Greek version the Syriac translation was made, and also that which is found among the apocryphal books in our English Bibles. Although the book of Tobit has always been rejected from the sacred canon, it was cited with respect by the early fathers of the Christian church; the simplicity of its narrative, and the pious and moral lessons it inculcates, have imparted to it an interest, which has rendered it one of the most popular of the apocryphal writings.

VI. The BOOK OF JUDITH professes to relate the defeat of the Assyrians by the Jews, through the instrumentality of their countrywoman Judith, whose genealogy is recorded in the eighth chapter; but so many geographical, historical, and chronological difficulties attend this book, that Luther, Grotius, and other eminent critics, have considered it rather as a drama or parable than a real history. Dr. Prideaux, however, is of opinion that it carries with it the air of a true history in most particulars, except that of the long-continued peace said to have been procured by Judith; which, according to the account given in this book, must have continued *eighty* years. But, as the Jews never enjoyed a peace of so long continuance since they were a nation, he is disposed to allow that circumstance to be a fiction, though he is inclined to think that the book in other respects is a true history. In opposition to this opinion, it has been contended by Heidegger, Moldenhawer, and others, that if it were a true history, some notice of the victory it records would have been taken by Josephus, who is on no occasion deficient when an opportunity presents itself of magnifying the achievements of his countrymen. Philo is equally silent concerning this book and its author. The time when and the place where he lived are totally unknown. Dr. Prideaux refers the book to the time of Manasseh; Jahn assigns

it to the age of the Maccabees, and thinks it was written to animate the Jews against the Syrians. Grotius refers it to the same period, and is of opinion that it is wholly a parabolic fiction written in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, when he came into Judea to persecute the Jewish church, and that its design was to confirm the Jews, under that persecution, in their hope that God would send them a deliverer. According to him, by Judith is intended Judea: by Bethulia, the temple or house of God; and by the sword which went out thence, the prayers of the saints; Nabuchadonosor denotes the devil; Assyria his kingdom, that is pride; Holofernes means Antiochus Epiphanes, who was the devil's instrument in that persecution, &c. &c. But such conjectures, as an able commentator * remarks, however ingenious, are better calculated to exhibit the powers of fancy and the abuse of learning, than to investigate truth, or throw light on what is uncertain and obscure.

The book of Judith was originally written in Chaldee, and translated into Latin. Besides this translation there are two others—one in Greek, and the other in Syriac; the former is attributed to Theodotion, but is certainly much older, for it is cited by Clement of Rome in his epistle to the Corinthians, who flourished sixty years before Theodotion. The Syriac version was made from the Greek, whence also our present English translation was made. †

VII. “THE REST OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER, which are found neither in the Hebrew nor in the Chaldee,” were originally written in Greek, whence they were translated into Latin, and formed part of the Italic or old Latin version in use before the time of Jerome. Being there annexed to the canonical book, they passed without censure, but were rejected by Jerome in his version, because he confined himself to the Hebrew Scriptures, and these chapters never were extant in the Hebrew language. They are evidently the production of an Hellenistic Jew, but are considered both by Jerome and Grotius as a work of pure fiction, which was annexed to the canonical book of Esther by way of embellishment.

From the coincidence between some of these apocryphal chapters and Josephus, it has been supposed that they are a compilation from the Jewish historian; and this conjecture is

* Mr. Hewlett, in his Preface to the book of Judith.

† Grotii Præfatio ad Annotationes in Librum Judith, apud Crit. Sacr. tom. v. p. 30. Moldenhawer, Introd. ad Vet. Test. pp. 155—158. Dr. Prideaux's Connexion, vol. i. pp. 36—40. Jahn, Introd. ad Vet. Fæd. pp. 554—561.

further confirmed by the mention of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, who lived no long time before Josephus. These additions to the book of Esther are often cited by the fathers of the church; and the council of Trent has assigned them a place among the canonical books.

VIII. "THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON" is commonly ascribed to that Hebrew monarch, either because the author imitated his sententious manner of writing, or because he sometimes speaks in his name, the better to recommend his moral precepts. It is, however, certain that Solomon was not the author, for it was never extant in Hebrew, nor received into the Hebrew canon, nor is the style like that of Solomon. Further, it is evident that it could not have been written by him, not only from the numerous passages which are cited in it from the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, who did not live till long after that king's reign, but also from its contradictions of historical truth, particularly in chap. xv. 14, where the author represents his countrymen as being in *subjection to enemies* whom he describes as being "most foolish, and more miserable than the very babes." Whereas we are expressly informed by the sacred historian, that Judah and Israel enjoyed the greatest possible prosperity and peace during the reign of Solomon (1 Kings iv. 20, 21. 24, 25). To which we may add, that this book contains several words borrowed from the Grecian games, that were not in use till long after his time: for instance, στεφανηφορεῖν (iv. 2), to wear a crown, such as was given to victors — πομπεύειν (iv. 2), to make a triumphant entry as the victors did, after they had received the crown — ἀγών (iv. 2. x. 12), the stadium or place appointed for the race — ἀθλον (iv. 2), the reward appropriated to the successful candidate — and βραβεύειν (x. 12), to confer the prize of victory. On these accounts, Jerome* informs us that several antient writers of the first three centuries ascribed it to Philo the Jew, a native of Alexandria, who flourished in the first century; and this opinion is generally adopted by the moderns, from the Platonic notions discoverable in it, as well as from its style, which evidently shows that it was the production of an Hellenistic Jew of Alexandria. Drusius indeed attributes it to another Philo, more antient than the person just mentioned, and who is cited by Josephus†; but this hypothesis is untenable, because the author of the book of Wisdom was confessedly a Jew, and the Philo of Drusius was a Hea-then.

* Præf. in Prov. Sal.

† Drusius de Henoch, c. 11.

The book of Wisdom consists of two parts; the first, which is written in the name of Solomon, contains a description or encomium of wisdom, by which comprehensive term the antient Jews understood prudence and foresight, knowledge and understanding, and principally the duties of religion and morality. This division includes the first ten chapters. The second part, comprizing the rest of the book, treats on a variety of topics widely differing from the subject of the first, viz. reflections on the history and conduct of the Israelites during their journeyings in the wilderness, and their subsequent proneness to idolatry. Hence he takes occasion to inveigh against idolatry, the origin of which he investigates, and concludes with reflections on the history of the people of God. His allegorical interpretations of the Pentateuch, and the precept (xvi. 28.) to worship God before the rising of the sun, have induced some critics to think that the author was of the sect of the Essenes.

This book has always been admired for its elegance, and for the admirable moral tendency of its precepts; on which account some of the antients styled it *Panaretos*, or the treasury of virtue. Although the fathers of the church, and particularly Jerome, uniformly considered it as apocryphal, yet they recommended its perusal, in consideration of its excellence. The third council of Carthage, held in 397, pronounced it to be a canonical book, under the name of the fourth book of Solomon, and the council of Trent confirmed this decision. Three antient translations of it are extant, in Syriac, Arabic, and Latin; the last was executed before the time of Jerome, who says that he did not correct it. It is full of barbarisms.

IX. "THE WISDOM OF JESUS THE SON OF SIRACH, OR ECCLESIASTICUS," like the preceding, has sometimes been considered as the production of Solomon, whence the council of Carthage deemed it canonical, under the title of the fifth book of Solomon, and their decision was adopted by the council of Trent. It is however manifest that it was not, and could not be, written by Solomon, because allusion is made (xlvii. 24, 25.) to the captivity; although it is not improbable that the author collected some scattered sentiments ascribed to Solomon, which he arranged with the other materials he had selected for his work. Sonntag is of opinion that this book is a collection of fragments or miscellaneous hints for a large work, planned out and begun, but not completed*. Respecting the author of the book of

* De Jesu Siracidæ Ecclesiastico Commentarius. 4to, Riga, 1792.

Ecclesiasticus, we have no information but what we collect from the book itself; and from this it appears that it was written by a person of the name of Jesus the son of Sirach, who had travelled in pursuit of knowledge. This man being deeply conversant with the Old Testament, and having collected many things from the prophets, blended them, as well as the sentences ascribed to Solomon with the result of his own observation, and thus endeavoured to produce a work of instruction that might be useful to his countrymen. This book was written in Hebrew, or rather the Syro-Chaldaic dialect then in use in Judea, and was translated by his grandson into Greek, for the use of the Alexandrian Jews, who were ignorant of the language of Judea. The translator himself is supposed to have been a son of Sirach, as well as his grandfather the author. The book was probably written about the year 232 B. C., when the author might be seventy years of age; and it was translated about sixty years after.

This book has met with general and deserved esteem in the Western church, and was introduced into the public service by the venerable reformers and compilers of our national liturgy.

It commences with an exhortation to the pursuit of wisdom; this is followed by numerous moral sentences or maxims, arranged in a less desultory manner than the proverbs of Solomon, as far as the forty-fourth chapter, at which the author begins his eulogy of the patriarchs, prophets, and celebrated men among the Jews, to the end of the fiftieth chapter. And the book concludes with a prayer.

The book of Ecclesiasticus was frequently cited by the fathers of the church, under the titles of *ἡ Ἰησοῦ Σοφία*, *the wisdom of Jesus*, *Παναγέτος Σοφία*, *wisdom, the treasure of all the virtues*, or *Λόγος*, *the discourse*. The Latins cite it under the appellation of *Ecclesiasticus*, to distinguish it from the book of Ecclesiastes. Antiently it was put into the hands of catechumens, on account of the edifying nature of its instruction; next to the inspired writings, a collection of purer moral precepts does not exist. Besides the Greek copy of this book, and the Latin version, there are two versions of it, one in Syriac, and the other in Arabic: the Latin translation is supposed to have been executed in the first century of the Christian æra; it closely follows the Greek, and is full of solecisms and barbarisms.

X. The book of BARUCH is not extant in Hebrew, and only in Greek and Syriac; but in what language it was originally written, it is now impossible to ascertain. It is equally uncertain by whom this book was written, and whether it contains any matters historically true, or whether the whole is a fiction.

Grotius is of opinion that it is an entire fiction, and that it was composed by some Hellenistic Jew under the name of Baruch. It has never been considered as a canonical book, either by Jews or Christians; though, in the earliest ages of Christianity, it was cited and read as a production entitled to credit. The principal subject of the book is an epistle, pretended to be sent by Jehoiakim and the captive Jews in Babylon, to their brethren in Judah and Jerusalem. The last chapter contains an epistle which falsely bears the name of Jeremiah; there are two versions of this book extant, one in Syriac, and one in Arabic: the Latin translation in the Vulgate is prior to the time of Jerome.

XI. "THE SONG OF THE THREE CHILDREN" is placed in the Greek version of Daniel, and also in the Vulgate Latin version, between the twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses of the third chapter. It does not appear to have ever been extant in Hebrew, and although it has always been admired for the piety of its sentiments, it was never admitted to be canonical, until it was recognized by the council of Trent. The fifteenth verse contains a direct falsehood; for it asserts that there was no prophet at that time, when it is well known that Daniel and Ezekiel both exercised the prophetic ministry in Babylon. This apocryphal fragment is therefore most probably the production of some Hellenistic Jew: the hymn (verses 29. *et seq.*) resembles the hundred and forty-eighth Psalm, and was so approved of by the compilers of our liturgy, that they appointed it to be used instead of the *Te Deum* during Lent.

XII. THE HISTORY OF SUSANNA has always been treated with some respect, but has never been considered as canonical, though the council of Trent admitted it into the number of sacred books. It is the work of some Hellenistic Jew, and in the Vulgate version it forms the thirteenth chapter of the book of Daniel. In the Septuagint version, it is placed at the beginning of that book. Lamy and some other modern critics, after Julius Africanus, and Origen, consider it to be both spurious and fabulous.

XIII. "The History of the Destruction of BEL AND THE DRAGON" was always rejected by the Jewish church; it is not extant either in the Hebrew or the Chaldee language. Jerome gives it no better title than that of *the fable of Bel and the Dragon*; nor has it obtained more credit with posterity, except with the fathers of the council of Trent, who determined it to be a part of the canonical Scriptures. The design of this fiction is to render idolatry ridiculous, and to exalt the true God; but the author has destroyed the illusion of his fiction by

transporting to Babylon the worship of animals, which was never practised in that country. This book forms the fourteenth chapter of Daniel in the Latin Vulgate; in the Greek it was called the prophecy of Habakkuk, the son of Jesus, of the tribe of Levi: but this is evidently false, for that prophet lived before the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and the events pretended to have taken place in this fable are assigned to the time of Cyrus. There are two Greek texts of this fragment, that of the Septuagint, and that found in Theodotion's Greek version of Daniel. The former is the most antient, and has been translated into Syriac. The Latin and Arabic versions, together with another Syriac translation, have been made from the text of Theodotion.

XIV. "THE PRAYER OF MANASSES, king of Judah, when he was holden captive in Babylon," though not unworthy of the occasion on which it is pretended to have been composed, was never recognized as canonical. It is rejected as spurious even by the church of Rome. In 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, 19. there is mention of a prayer by this king, which is said to be written "in the Book of the kings of Israel," and also "among the sayings of the seers." But it is evident that this composition, which abounds with deeply pious and penitent expressions, cannot be the prayer there alluded to: for it never was extant in Hebrew, nor can it be traced to a higher source than the Vulgate Latin version. As it is mentioned by no writer more antient than the Pseudo-Clement, in the pretended apostolical constitutions, which were compiled in the fourth century, it is probable that this prayer was composed by some unknown person, who thought he could supply the loss of the original prayer.

XV. The two books of MACCABEES* are thus denominated, because they relate the patriotic and gallant exploits of Judas Maccabeus and his brethren: they are both admitted into the canon of Scripture by the church of Rome. The *first* book contains the history of the Jews, from the beginning of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes to the death of Simon, a period of about thirty-four years. It was originally written in the Syro-Chaldaic language, in which it was extant in the time of Jerome, who says that he saw it†. The author of this book is not certainly known; some conjecture that it was written by John Hyrcanus, the son of Simon, who was prince and high priest of the Jews for nearly thirty years, and who commenced

* On the origin of the term 'Maccabees,' see Vol. I. p. 65, note.

† Prolog. Galeat. sive Præf. in Lib. Regum.

his government at the time when this history ends: by others it is ascribed to one of the Maccabees, and many are of opinion that it was compiled by the Great Synagogue. It is however most probable that it was composed in the time of John Hyrcanus, when the wars of the Maccabees were terminated, either by Hyrcanus himself, or by some persons employed by him. From the Syro-Chaldaic it was translated into Greek, and thence into Latin. Our English version is made from the Greek *. The first book of Maccabees is a most valuable historical monument, written with great accuracy and fidelity, on which more reliance may be placed than on the writings of Josephus, who has borrowed his materials from it, and has frequently mistaken its meaning.†

XVII. The SECOND BOOK OF MACCABEES consists of several pieces compiled by an unknown author. It commences with two epistles sent from the Jews of Jerusalem to those of Alexandria and Egypt, exhorting them to observe the feast of the dedication of the new altar, erected by Judas Maccabeus on his purifying the temple. These epistles, which are confessedly spurious, are followed by the author's preface to his history, which is an abridgment of a larger work, compiled by one Jason, an Hellenistic Jew of Cyrene; who wrote in Greek the history of Judas Maccabeus and his brethren, and an account of the wars against Antiochus Epiphanes, and his son Eupator, in five books. The entire work of Jason has long since perished, and Dr. Prideaux is of opinion ‡ that the author of this second book of Maccabees was an Hellenistic Jew of Alexandria, because he makes a distinction between the temple in Egypt and that at Jerusalem, calling the latter "*the great temple*". This book is by no means equal in accuracy to the first, which it contradicts in some instances §; it is not arranged in chronological order, and sometimes also it is at variance with the inspired writings. Compare 2 Macc. i. 18. with Ezra iii. 2, 3. and ii. 5—8. with Jer. iii. 16. The second book of Maccabees, therefore, must be read with great caution. It contains the history of about fifteen years, from the execution of the commission of Heliodorus, who was sent by Seleucus to bring away the treasures of the temple, to the victory obtained by Judas Maccabeus over Nicanor, that is, from the year of the world 3828 to 3843. Two antient translations of this book are extant, one in Syriac, the other in Latin;

* Prideaux's Connexion, vol. ii. pp. 185, 186.

† Michaelis, Introd. to the New Test. vol. i. p. 71.

‡ Connexion, vol. ii. pp. 186, 187.

§ See p. 322 *supra*, note †.

both are prior to the time of Jerome, and both miserably executed. The version in our Bibles was executed from the Greek.

Besides the two books of Maccabees here noticed, there are two others which bear their names, but very improperly: neither of them has ever been reputed canonical.

The *third* Book of Maccabees contains the history of the persecution of the Jews in Egypt by Ptolemy Philopator, and their sufferings under it. From its style, this book appears to have been written by some Alexandrian Jew: it abounds with the most absurd fables. With regard to its subject, it ought in strictness to be called the first book of Maccabees, as the events it professes to relate occurred before the achievements of that heroic family; but, as it is of less authority and repute than the other two, it is reckoned after them. It is extant in Syriac, though the translator seems to have been but imperfectly acquainted with the Greek language; and it is also found in most antient manuscripts of the Greek Septuagint, particularly in the Alexandrian and Vatican manuscripts: but it was never inserted in the Latin Vulgate, nor in our English Bibles.

Of the *fourth* Book of the Maccabees very little is known. It is destitute of every internal mark of credibility, and is supposed to be the same as the book “concerning the government, or empire of reason”, ascribed to Josephus by Philostratus, Eusebius, and Jerome. It is extant in some Greek manuscripts, in which it is placed after the three books of Maccabees. Dr. Lardner thinks it is the work of some unknown Christian writer.

PART III.

BOOK II.

ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE CANON, AUTHENTICITY, INSPIRATION, ETC. OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

SECTION I.

ON THE CANON, GENUINENESS, AUTHENTICITY, UNCORRUPTED PRESERVATION AND INTEGRITY, OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- I. *General Title of the New Testament*;—II. *Account of its CANON*;—
—III. *GENUINENESS of the Books of the New Testament*;—
IV. *Their AUTHENTICITY proved, 1. From the Impossibility of For-*
gery;—2. *From internal Evidence*;—3. *From antient Christian,*
Jewish, and Heathen Testimonies in their favour;—4. *From antient*
Versions;—V. *The UNCORRUPTED PRESERVATION and INTEGRITY*
of the New Testament demonstrated.

I. **THAT** an extraordinary person, called Jesus Christ, flourished in Judea in the Augustan age, is a fact better supported and authenticated, than that there lived such men as Cyrus, Alexander, and Julius Cæsar; for although their histories are recorded by various antient writers, yet the memorials of their conquests and empires have for the most part perished. Babylon, Persepolis, and Ecbatana are no more; and travellers have long disputed, but have not been able to ascertain, the site of antient Nineveh, that “exceeding great city of three days’ journey” (Jonah iii. 3). How few vestiges of Alexander’s victorious arms are at present to be seen in Asia Minor and India! And equally few are the standing memorials in France and Britain, to evince that there was such a

person as Julius Cæsar, who subdued the one, and invaded the other. Not so defective are the evidences concerning the existence of Jesus Christ. That he lived in the reign of Tiberius emperor of Rome, and that he suffered death under Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea, are facts that are not only acknowledged by the Jews of every subsequent age, and by the testimonies of several Heathen writers *, but also by Christians of every age and country, who have commemorated, and still commemorate, the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, and his spiritual kingdom, by their constant and universal profession of certain principles of religion, and by their equally constant and universal celebration of divine worship on the Lord's day, or first day of the week, and likewise of the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. These religious doctrines and ordinances they profess to derive from a collection of writings, composed after the ascension of Jesus Christ, which they acknowledge to be divine. This collection is generally known by the appellation of *ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ*, the NEW COVENANT, or NEW TESTAMENT; a title, which, though neither given by divine command, nor applied to these writings by the apostles, was adopted in a very early age †. Although the precise time of its introduction is not known, yet it is justified by several passages in the Scriptures ‡, and is, in particular, warranted by Saint Paul, who calls the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the Gospel dispensation *Καὶνὴ Διαθήκη*, the New Covenant, in opposition to those of the Mosaic dispensation, which he terms *Παλαιὰ Διαθήκη*, the Old Covenant §. This appellation, in process of time, was by a metonymy transferred to the collection of apostolical and evangelical writings. The title, "New Covenant," then, signifies the book which contains the terms of the New Covenant, upon which God is pleased to offer salvation to mankind

* See particularly Tacitus, *Annal.* lib. v. c. 44. Suetonius, in *Neron.* c. 16. and Pliny, lib. x. *epist.* 97. Dr. Lardner has collected all the passages of these writers in his *Testimonies of Antient Heathens.* Works, vol. vii. pp. 251, *et seq.* 266, *et seq.* 273, *et seq.*

† Michaelis's *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. i. p. 1. Bishop Marsh, in a note, thinks it probable that this title was used so early as the second century, because the word *testamentum* was used in that sense by the Latin Christians before the expiration of that period, as appears from Tertullian. *Adversus Marcionem*, lib. iv. c. 1. But the first instance in which the term *καὶνὴ διαθήκη* actually occurs in the sense of "writings of the new covenant," is in Origen's treatise *Περὶ Αρχῶν*, lib. iv. c. 1. (*Op. tom. i.* p. 156).—Michaelis, vol. i. p. 343. See also Rosenmüller's *Scholia in N. T.* tom. i. p. 1; Rumpæi *Commentatio Critica in Libros Novi Testamenti*, pp. 1—3; and Leusden's *Philologus Hebræo-Græcus*, p. 1.

‡ Matt. xxvi. 28. Gal. iii. 17. Heb. viii. 8. ix. 15—20. § 2 Cor. iii. 6. 14.

through the mediation of Jesus Christ. But, according to the meaning of the primitive church, which bestowed this title, it is not altogether improperly rendered *New Testament*; as being that, in which the Christian's inheritance is sealed to him as a son and heir of God, and in which the death of Christ as a testator is related at large, and applied to our benefit. As this title implies that in the Gospel unspeakable gifts are given or bequeathed to us antecedent to all conditions required of us, the title of *TESTAMENT* may be retained, although that of *COVENANT* would be more correct and proper. *

II. The writings, thus collectively termed the *New Testament*, consist of twenty-seven books, composed on various occasions, and at different times and places, by eight different authors, all of whom were contemporary with Jesus Christ. They contain the history of our Saviour, the first propagation of his religion, together with the principles of Christianity, and various precepts or rules of life; and were addressed to the different churches which their authors had established in various parts of the world. Different churches at first received different books according to their situation and circumstances. Their canons were gradually enlarged; and at no very great distance of time from the age of the apostles, the Christians, with a view to secure to future ages a divine and perpetual standard of faith and practice, unanimously agreed to collect these writings together into one volume under the title of the "*New Testament*," or the "*Canon of the New Testament*." Neither the names of the persons that were concerned in making this collection, nor the exact time when it was undertaken, can at present be ascertained with any degree of certainty; nor is it at all necessary that we should be precisely informed concerning either of these particulars. It is sufficient for us to know that the principal parts of the *New Testament* were collected before the death of the apostle Saint John, or at least not long after that event †.

* Bishop Percy's *Key to the New Testament*, p. 45.

† Of all the various opinions that have been maintained concerning the person who first collected the canon of the *New Testament*, the most general seems to be, that the several books were originally collected by Saint John;—an opinion, for which the testimony of Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 24*) is very confidently quoted as an indisputable authority. But it is to be observed, says Mosheim, that, allowing even the highest degree of weight to Eusebius's authority, nothing further can be collected from his words, than that Saint John approved of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and added his own to them by way of supplement. Concerning any of the other books of the *New Testament*, Eusebius is totally silent. Mosheim's *Commentaries*, translated by Mr. Vidal, vol. i. p. 151. Stosch, in his learned *Commentatio Critica de Librorum*

“The persecutions,” it has been well remarked, “to which the professors of Christianity were constantly exposed, and the want of a national establishment of Christianity, for several centuries, prevented any general assemblage of Christians for the purpose of settling their canon of Scripture.”* But, though the number of the books thus received as sacred and canonical was not determined by the authority of councils, we are not left in uncertainty concerning their genuineness and authenticity, for which we have infinitely more decisive and satisfactory evidence than we have for the productions of any antient classic author, concerning whose genuineness and authenticity no doubt was ever entertained.

III. We receive the books of the New Testament, as the genuine works of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Paul, for the same reason that we receive the writings of Xenophon, of Polybius, of Plutarch, of Cæsar, and of Livy; namely, because we have the uninterrupted testimony of ages to their genuineness, and we have no reason to suspect imposition. This argument, Michaelis remarks, is much stronger when applied to the books of the New Testament than when applied to any other writings: for they were addressed to large societies, in whose presence they were often read, and were acknowledged by them to be the writings of the apostles. Whereas the most eminent profane writings, that are still extant, were addressed only to individuals, or to no persons at all: and we have no authority to affirm that they were read in public: on the contrary, we know that a liberal education was uncommon, books were scarce, and the knowledge of them was confined to a few individuals in every nation.

The New Testament was read over three quarters of the world, while profane writers were limited to one nation or to one country. An uninterrupted succession of writers, from the apostolic ages to the present time, either quote the sacred writings, or make allusions to them; and these quotations and allusions, as will be shown in a subsequent page, are made not only by friends, but also by enemies. This cannot be asserted of the best classic authors: and as translations of the New Testament were made in the second century† which in the

Nov. Test. Canone (pp. 103, *et seq.* 8vo, Franckfort, 1755), has given the opinions of Ens, Lampe, Frickius, Dodwell, Vitranga, and Dupin. He adopts the last, which in substance corresponds with that above given, and defends it at considerable length. Ibid. pp. 113, *et seq.*

* Bishop Tomline's *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. i. p. 270.

† See the history of the translations of the New Testament, *supra*, Vol. I. pp. 296—306.

course of one or two centuries more were greatly multiplied, it became absolutely impossible to forge new writings, or to corrupt the sacred text, unless we suppose that men of different nations, sentiments, and languages, and often exceedingly hostile to each other, should *all* agree in one forgery. This argument is so strong, that, if we deny the authenticity of the New Testament, we may with a thousand times greater propriety reject all the other writings in the world;—we may even throw aside human testimony. * But as this subject is of the greatest importance (for the arguments that prove the authenticity of the New Testament also prove the truth of the Christian religion), we shall consider it more at length; and having first shown that the books, which compose the canon of the New Testament, are not spurious, we shall briefly consider the positive evidence for their authenticity.

A genuine book is one written by the person whose name it bears as its author; the opposite to genuine is *spurious*, supposititious, or, as some critics term it, *pseudepigraphal*, that which is clandestinely put in the place of another. The reasons which may induce a critic to suspect a work to be spurious, are stated by Michaelis to be the following:

1. When doubts have been entertained from its first appearance in the world, whether it proceeded from the author to whom it is ascribed; — 2. When the immediate friends of the pretended author, who were able to decide upon the subject, have denied it to be his production; — 3. When a long series of years has elapsed after his death, in which the book was unknown, and in which it must unavoidably have been mentioned and quoted, had it really existed; — 4. When the style is different from that of his other writings, or, in case no other remain, different from that which might reasonably be expected; — 5. When events are recorded which happened later than the time of the pretended author; — 6. When opinions are advanced which contradict those he is known to maintain in his other writings. Though this latter argument alone leads to no positive conclusion, since every man is liable to change his opinion, or through forgetfulness to vary in the circumstances of the same relation, of which Josephus, in his *Antiquities* and *War of the Jews*, affords a striking example.

Now, of all these various grounds for denying a work to be genuine, not one can be applied with justice to the New Testament. For, in the first place, it cannot be shown that any one

* Enc. Brit. vol. xvii. p. 135. 3d edit.

doubted of its authenticity in the period in which it first appeared; — Secondly, no antient accounts are on record, whence we may conclude it to be spurious; — Thirdly, no considerable period elapsed after the death of the apostles, in which the New Testament was unknown, but on the contrary it is mentioned by their very contemporaries, and the accounts of it in the second century are still more numerous; — Fourthly, no argument can be brought in its disfavour from the nature of the style, it being exactly such as might be expected from the apostles, not Attic but Jewish Greek; — Fifthly, no facts are recorded which happened after their death; — Lastly, no doctrines are maintained, which contradict the known tenets of the authors, since, beside the New Testament, no writings of the apostles exist. But to the honour of the New Testament be it spoken, it contains numerous contradictions to the tenets and doctrines of the fathers in the second and third century, whose morality is different from that of the Gospel, which recommends fortitude and submission to unavoidable evils, but not that enthusiastic ardour for martyrdom for which those centuries are distinguished; and alludes to ceremonies which in the following ages were either disused or totally unknown; — all which circumstances infallibly demonstrate that the New Testament is not a production of either of those centuries. *

IV. From the preceding considerations it is evident, that there is not the smallest reason to doubt that these writings are as certainly genuine as the most indisputable works of the Greeks and Romans. But the authenticity of the New Testament does not rest on merely negative proof, we have evidence the most direct and positive that can be desired; and this evidence may be arranged under the three following heads, namely, 1. The impossibility, arising from the nature of the thing itself; — 2. Its own internal evidence; — 3. The antient, Christian, Jewish, and Heathen testimonies in its favour; — and, 4. From the antient versions of the New Testament made in the very first ages of the Christian church.

1. *The impossibility of a forgery, arising from the nature of the thing itself, is evident.* It is impossible to establish forged writings as authentic in any place where there are persons strongly inclined and well qualified to detect the fraud †. Now

* Michaelis's Introd. to the New Test. vol. i. pp. 25 — 30.

† Witness the unsuccessful attempts of Macpherson to impose his own productions on the public as the genuine works of Ossian, so ably detected by Mr. Laing; of Chat-

the Jews were the most violent enemies of Christianity: they put its founder to death; they persecuted his disciples with implacable fury; and they were anxious to stifle the new religion in its birth. If the writings of the New Testament had been forged, would not the Jews have detected the imposture? Is there a single instance on record, where a few individuals have imposed a history upon the world against the testimony of a whole nation? Would the inhabitants of Palestine have received the Gospels, if they had not had sufficient evidence that Jesus Christ really appeared among them, and performed the miracles ascribed to him? Or would the churches of Rome or of Corinth have acknowledged the epistles addressed to them as the genuine works of Saint Paul, if he had never preached among them? Or, supposing any impostor to have attempted the invention and distribution of writings under his name, or the names of the other apostles, is it possible that they could have been received without contradiction in all the Christian communities of the three several quarters of the globe? We might as well attempt to prove that the history of the reformation is the invention of historians, and that no revolution happened in Great Britain during the seventeenth century, or in France during the eighteenth century, and the last fifteen years.*

2. The *internal evidence* is, if possible, much stronger and more decisive than the preceding: it may be comprized under three particulars.

FIRST, *the writers of the New Testament are said to have been Jews by birth, and of the Jewish religion, and also to have been immediate witnesses of what they relate.* This is every where manifest from the mode of narrating their story—from their numerous allusions to the religious ceremonies of the Jews—from the universal prevalence of words, phrases, and thoughts derived from the Old Testament—from the variety of Hebraic words, constructions, and phrases occurring in the Greek of the New Testament, all of which betray an author to whom the Jewish mode of thinking was perfectly natural—from the characters of time, place, persons, and things evident in the New Testament, and particularly in the Gospels and Acts:—

terton, in imposing his poetical compositions as the works of Rowley, a priest of the fifteenth century, now universally acknowledged to be forgeries;—and of Mr. Ireland junior, in his celebrated Shakspearian manuscripts, the fabrication of which was detected by Mr. Malone in his “Inquiry.”

* Enc. Brit. vol. xvii. p. 135. Michaelis, vol. i. p. 31.

all which are related with the confidence of men, who are convinced that their readers already know that they themselves saw and experienced every thing they record, and that their assertions may therefore be considered as proofs. In short, they relate, like men who wrote for readers that were their contemporaries, and lived at the very time in which their history happened, and who knew, or might easily have known, the persons themselves. This is as evident, as it is that the noble English historian, who wrote an account of the troubles in the time of Charles I., was himself concerned in those transactions.

SECONDLY, *The language and style of the New Testament afford an indisputable proof of its authenticity.* The language is Greek, which was at that period (in the first century of the Roman monarchy), and had been ever since the time of Alexander the Great, a kind of universal language, just as the French is at present; but it is Hebraic-Greek, that is, Greek intermixed with many peculiarities exclusively belonging to the Hebrew or Chaldee, and Syriac (the two languages then spoken in common life by the Jews of Palestine); whence it is evident that the writers were “*unlettered and private persons*” (Acts iv. 13), neither trained in the schools of the synagogues, nor Scribes, doctors, nor Pharisees, who sat in Moses’ seat as public and authorized teachers. As the reasons why the New Testament was written in Greek, together with its peculiar structure, and the arguments thence deducible in favour of its authenticity, have already been discussed in another part of this work *, we shall here only remark that its constant allusions to the temple worship, as well as to the peculiar usages and sentiments of the Jews, and the prevalence of the Old Testament phraseology, which is interwoven rather than quoted by the writers of the New Testament, are all so many internal evidences that it was written by Jews, and consequently afford so many proofs of its authenticity.

THIRDLY, *The circumstantiality of the narrative, as well as the coincidence of the accounts delivered in the New Testament with the history of those times, are also an indisputable internal evidence of its authenticity.* “Whoever,” says Michaelis, “undertakes to forge a set of writings, and ascribe them to persons who lived in a former period, exposes himself to the utmost danger of a discordancy with the history and manners of the age to which his accounts are referred; and this danger in-

* See Part II. Chapter III. Sect. I. On the Original Languages of Scripture; § 2. On the Greek Language. Vol. I. pp. 237—243.

creases in proportion as they relate to points not mentioned in general history, but to such as belong only to a single city, sect, religion, or school. Of all books that ever were written, there is none, if the New Testament is a forgery, so liable to detection; the scene of action is not confined to a single country, but displayed in the greatest cities of the Roman empire; allusions are made to the various manners and principles of the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews, which are carried so far with respect to this last nation, as to extend even to the trifles and follies of their schools. A Greek or Roman Christian, who lived in the second or third century, though as well versed in the writings of the ancients as Eustathius or Asconius, would have been wanting still in Jewish literature; and a Jewish convert in those ages, even the most learned rabbi, would have been equally deficient in the knowledge of Greece and Rome. If, then, the New Testament, thus exposed to detection (had it been an imposture), is found, after the severest researches, to harmonize with the history, the manners, and the opinions of the first century, and since the more minutely we inquire, the more perfect we find the coincidence, we must conclude that it was beyond the reach of human abilities to effectuate so wonderful a deception*." A few facts will illustrate this remark.

The Gospels state that Jesus Christ was born during the reign of the Roman emperor Augustus; that he began his ministry in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius; that, about three years and a half afterwards, Pilate, the Roman governor, condemned him to death; and that he was accordingly put to death; that Saint Paul defended himself before the Roman governors Felix and Festus, and before the Jewish king Agrippa, &c. An impostor would not write so *circumstantially*.

Further, there are certain historical circumstances, respecting the political constitutions of the world mentioned in the New Testament, which *coincide with the accounts of contemporary profane historians*, and incontestably point out the time when they were written. Thus Palestine is stated to be divided into three principal provinces, Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. At that time this country was subject to the Romans, but had formerly been governed by its own kings; the Jews were deprived of the absolute power of life and death; a Roman governor resided at Jerusalem. The nation was discontented

* Michaelis, vol. i. p. 49.

with the Roman sovereignty, refused to pay tribute, and was disposed to revolt. Two religious sects are represented as having the chief sway among the Jews, viz. the Scribes and Pharisees; the former, who taught a mechanical religion, deceived and tyrannized over the people, by whom, however, they were almost idolized; while the latter, who adopted an Epicurean philosophy, were strongly supported by the principal characters of the nation. The temple of Jerusalem was then standing, and was annually visited by a great number of the Jews, who were scattered abroad in different parts of the world. These and similar circumstances are rather presupposed as universally known than related by the authors of these writings; and they agree most exactly with the condition of the Jews, and of the Roman empire, in the first century of the Roman monarchy, as described by contemporary profane writers. *

Once more, between the epistles of Saint Paul and the history related in the book called the Acts of the Apostles, there exist many notes of *undesigned coincidence* or correspondency; the perusal of which is sufficient to prove, that neither the history was taken from the letters, nor the letters from the history. “And the *undesignedness* of these agreements (which undesignedness is gathered from their latency, their minuteness, their obliquity, the suitableness of the circumstances in which they consist, to the places in which those circumstances occur, and the circuitous references by which they are traced out) demonstrates that they have not been produced by meditation or by any fraudulent contrivance. But coincidences from which these causes are excluded, and which are too close and numerous to be accounted for by accidental concurrences of fiction, must necessarily have truth for their foundation †.” These coincidences are illustrated at considerable length, and in a most masterly manner, by the late Dr. Paley in his “*Horæ Paulinæ*,” to which we must refer the reader, as the argument does not admit of abridgment. It only remains therefore that we point out, in this place, how the argument bears upon the question of the authenticity of the New Testament now under consideration. And, 1. In these letters (Rom. xv. 18, 19. 2 Cor. xii. 2). Saint Paul affirms his own performance of miracles; and that miracles were the signs of an apostle;—2. This testimony shows that the series of actions represented by Saint

* See Part I. Vol. I. pp. 29, *et seq. supra*, in which the principal circumstances above adverted to are confirmed by the testimony of profane writers, and particularly of Josephus.

† Paley's Evidences, vol. ii. p. 186.

Paul was real, which proves that the original witnesses of the Christian history devoted themselves to lives of toil and suffering, in consequence of the truth of that history;—and, 3. It proves that the author of the Acts was well acquainted with Saint Paul's history, and a companion of his travels; which establishes the credit of Saint Luke's Gospel, considering them as two parts of the same history; for though there are instances of *second* parts being forgeries, we know of none where the second part is genuine, and the first spurious*. Lastly, the similitude or coincidence between the style of Saint John's Gospel, and the first epistle that bears his name, is so striking, that no reader, who is capable of discerning what is peculiar in an author's turn of thinking, can entertain the slightest doubt of their being the productions of one and the same writer†. Writings so circumstanced prove themselves and one another to be genuine.

* Paley's Evidences, vol. ii. pp. 187—190.

† The following comparative table of passages, from the Gospel and first Epistle of Saint John, will (we think) prove the point above stated beyond the possibility of contradiction:

<i>Epistle.</i>	<i>Gospel.</i>
Ch. I. 1. That which was from the beginning—ὁ θεὸς αὐμεθεα, which we have contemplated—concerning the living word.	Ch. I. 1. In the beginning was the word. 14. And, θεαμεθα, we beheld his glory. 4. In him was life. 14. The word was made flesh.
II. 5. Whosoever keepeth his word, truly in that man the love of God is perfected.	XIV. 23. If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him.
II. 6. He who saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. See ch. iii. 24. iv. 13. 16.	XV. 4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bring forth fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
II. 8. I write to you a new commandment.	XIII. 34. A new commandment I give to you, that ye love one another as I have loved you.
III. 11. This is the message which ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.	I. 5. The light shineth in darkness. 9. That was the true light.
II. 8. The darkness passeth away, and the light which is true, now shineth.	XI. 10. If a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light to him.
10. Abideth in the light, and there is no stumbling-block to him.	XVII. 3. This is the eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God. And Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.
II. 13. Young children, I write to you, because ye have known the Father.	III. 3. Except a man be begotten again. 5. Except a man be begotten of water and of the Spirit.
14. Because ye have known him from the beginning.	I. 12. To them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on his name.
II. 29. Every one who worketh righteousness, is begotten of God. See also iii. 9. v. 1.	XVII. 24. Be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.
III. 1. Behold how great love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God!	
III. 2. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.	

The forgers of these things, if forgeries they were, must (as Dr. Jortin has forcibly remarked) have equalled father Hardouin's atheistical monks of the thirteenth century; who, according to his fantastical account, in an age of ignorance and barbarism surpassed in abilities all the antients and moderns; forged the Greek and Latin authors whom we call classical; and were not only great poets, but also great mathematicians, chronologers, geographers, astronomers, and critics, and capable of inserting in their proper places names and accounts of men, rivers, cities, and regions, eclipses of the sun and moon, Athenian archons, Attic months, Olympiads, and Roman consuls; all which happy inventions have been since confirmed by astronomical calculations and tables, voyages, inscriptions, Fasti Capitolini, fragments, manuscripts, and a diligent collation of authors with each other. *

Notwithstanding these decisive *internal* arguments for the authenticity of the New Testament, some objections to it have been drawn from real or apparent contradictions between the accounts of profane authors and those of the New Testament. It cannot be denied that such apparent contradictions

Epistle.

III. 8. He who worketh sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.

III. 13. Do not wonder, my brethren, that the world hateth you.

IV. 9. By this the love of God was manifested, that God sent his son, the only begotten, into the world, that we might live through him.

IV. 12. No man hath seen God at any time.

V. 13. These things I have written to you who believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life; and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

V. 14. If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.

V. 20. The son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Gospel.

VIII. 44. Ye are of your father the devil—He was a murderer from the beginning.

XV. 20. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

III. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

I. 18. No man hath seen God at any time.

XX. 31. These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.

XIV. 14. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

XVII. 2. Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3. And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.—Macknight on the Epistles, Pref. to 1 John, sect. ii.

* Remarks on Eccles. Hist. vol. i. pp. 28, *et seq.* Less's Authenticity of the New Testament, translated by Mr. Kingdon, pp. 1—26. Michaelis, vol. i. pp. 4—54. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book ii. pp. 687—692. Stosch, de Canone, p. 89. Pictet, Théologie Chrétienne, tome i. p. 83. Ernesti Inst. Interp. Nov. Test. pars iii. p. 147, *et seq.*

do exist. Michaelis * has given a few instances, which it is not necessary here to state, as we have already had occasion to discuss this topic at considerable length †. It may suffice therefore to add, that these seeming contradictions are such as admit of solutions both easy and natural, which *invariably* terminate in favour of the veracity and authenticity of the sacred historian.

3. Satisfactory as the two preceding arguments, for the authenticity of the New Testament, unquestionably are, there is another source of evidence by no means inferior to them in decisiveness and importance—we mean the EXTERNAL EVIDENCE *arising from the testimony of antient writers, Christians, Heretics, and Heathens, proceeding in regular succession from the apostolic age to the present time, and also from antient versions that are still extant.* But as their *particular* testimonies to the genuineness of the several books of the New Testament will be stated in the course of this volume, when we treat on them separately, we shall at present confine our attention to a general statement of this part of the evidence.

The first *contemporary* writer, whom we may cite, is the apostle Paul, who (1 Tim. v. 18.) has the following sentence—*The labourer is worthy of his reward*, which occurs only in Saint Luke's Gospel (x. 7); whence we conclude that this was extant at the time Saint Paul wrote his epistle to Timothy. In further illustration of this testimony it may be observed, that as the apostles enjoyed miraculous gifts, particularly the gift of discerning spirits, they very early acknowledged the inspiration of one another's writings, and considered them on the same footing with the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Thus Saint Peter, speaking of Saint Paul's epistles, says (2 Pet. iii. 16), that the "*unteachable and unstable wrest them, as they also do the OTHER SCRIPTURES, unto their own destruction.*" But, besides this contemporary evidence of the apostles, we have the testimony of five different authors of the same age; who, without any intention to prove this point, have by accident cited a variety of passages from the gospels, viz. Barnabas, Clement, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp. ‡

1. BARNABAS, the fellow-labourer of Saint Paul (Acts xiii. 2, 3. 46, 47. 1 Cor. ix. 4—7), who is also expressly styled an

* Introd. to the New Test. vol. i. pp. 54—69.

† See Vol. I. pp. 481—484, and pp. 67, 68.

‡ The best edition of their works is to be found in the *Patres Apostolici*, with the notes of Cotelierius and Le Clerc, in 2 vols. folio, Amst. 1724. An excellent translation of them was made by Archbishop Wake, of which a new edition was published in 1817.

apostle, (Acts xiv. 4. 14), is the author of an epistle that was held in the greatest esteem by the antients, and which is still extant. In this epistle he makes several allusions to the apostolic writings. *

2. CLEMENT Bishop of Rome, and a fellow-labourer of Saint Paul (Phil. iv. 3), wrote an epistle (which has not come down to us entire) in the name of the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, in order to compose certain dissensions that prevailed there. In this epistle there are several passages, which exhibit the words of Christ as they stand in the gospels, without mentioning them as quotations, agreeably to the usage which then generally prevailed. He also cites most of the epistles. It is generally supposed that Clement was ordained Bishop of Rome A. D. 91, and that he died in the third year of the reign of Trajan, A. D. 100. †

3. HERMAS was also contemporary with Saint Paul, by whom he is mentioned in the epistle to the Romans (xvi. 4). He wrote a work in three books, towards the close of the first century, entitled the "*Pastor*" or "*Shepherd*," which was highly esteemed by the early fathers. It was originally written in Greek, though now extant only in a Latin version; and it contains numerous allusions to the New Testament. ‡

4. IGNATIUS was Bishop of Antioch, A. D. 70, and suffered martyrdom A. D. 107. If, (as some have supposed) he was not one of the little children whom Jesus took up in his arms and blessed, it is certain that he conversed familiarly with the apostles, and was perfectly acquainted with their doctrine. He has left several epistles that are still extant, in which he has distinctly quoted the gospels of Saint Matthew and Saint John, and has cited or alluded to the Acts and most of the epistles. §

5. POLYCARP was an immediate disciple of the apostle Saint John, by whom he was also appointed Bishop of Smyrna. He had conversed with many who had seen Jesus Christ, and is supposed to have been the angel of the church of Smyrna,

* Lardner's Works, vol. ii. pp. 12—22, 8vo; or vol. i. pp. 283—289, 4to. 'The quarto edition having been completed since the former part of this work was printed, we have introduced references to *both editions* for the convenience of those, who may have an opportunity of consulting either of them. Dr. Less, however, questions the propriety of considering Barnabas as a testimony for the authenticity of the New Testament.—See his "Authenticity," pp. 33—40. Cotelerii Patres Apostolici, vol. i. pp. 15—66.

† Less, pp. 41—62. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 22—47; 4to, vol. i. pp. 289—303. Cotelerius, vol. i. pp. 185—189.

‡ Cotelerius, vol. i. pp. 75—126. Less; pp. 62—70. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 50—65; 4to, vol. i. pp. 308—313.

§ Cotelerius, vol. ii. pp. 11—42. Less, pp. 70—78. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 65—85; 4to, vol. i. pp. 313—325.

to whom the epistle in the Revelation is addressed. He suffered martyrdom about the year 166. Of the various writings which he is recorded to have left, only one epistle remains; and in this he has nearly *forty* allusions to the different books of the New Testament.*

To these evidences of the apostolical fathers we are enabled to add the testimonies of some other fathers of the century immediately following that of the apostles, and most of whom had in their youth conversed with those who had seen the apostles. Although the writings of many of these fathers are no longer extant, to the great loss of Christianity, yet satisfactory evidences collected from them, have been preserved by ecclesiastical historians.

1. PAPIAS, Bishop of Hierapolis in Asia, flourished A. D. 116. He ascribes the respective Gospels to Saint Matthew and Saint Mark, mentions the sources whence Mark collected his account, and in what language Matthew wrote; and also expressly notices the first epistles of Peter and John. †

2. JUSTIN, surnamed the Martyr, from his having sealed with his blood the truth of the Christian religion, flourished about twenty years after the preceding writer. Before his conversion he had carefully studied the Stoic, Peripatetic, Pythagorean and Platonic systems of philosophy; and must therefore, on account of his learning and antiquity, be considered as a witness of the greatest importance. Several of his genuine works still remain, and contain numerous quotations from the Gospels, as well as allusions to them. He expressly mentions the Acts of the Apostles, and cites or alludes to several of the Epistles. His references prove the early publication of the Gospels, and that they were in the hands not only of Christians, but also of the Jews, and probably of the Gentiles. ‡

3. TATIAN flourished about the year 172, and was a follower of Justin Martyr, after whose death he adopted various absurd and heretical tenets, which are detailed by ecclesiastical historians. He composed a Harmony of the Gospels, called ΔΙΑ ΤΕΣΣΑΡΩΝ, *of the four*; in which he is charged with making alterations and omissions in the Gospels. Eusebius's account of his Harmony, however, proves that in the earliest

* The Greek epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians is not entire. It is given in Cotelierius, vol. i. pp. 186—189, and the entire Latin epistle in pp. 190, 191. Less, pp. 78—83. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 86—100; 4to, pp. 325—333.

† Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 39. Less, pp. 84—89. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 106—114; 4to, vol. i. pp. 336—341.

‡ Less, pp. 101—107. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 115—129; 4to, vol. i. pp. 341—349.

times there were four Gospels, and only four which were in esteem with the Christians. His oration or discourse against the Gentiles, which is said to have been the most useful of all his writings, contains several quotations from, and allusions to, the Gospels. *

4. HEGESIPPUS, who was a converted Jew, was born in the beginning of the second century, and, according to the Alexandrian Chronicle, died in the reign of the emperor Commodus. He relates that, in his journey from Palestine to Rome, he conversed with many bishops, all of whom held one and the same doctrine; and that “in every city the same doctrine was taught, which the law and the prophets, and the Lord teacheth.” †

5. About the year 170, during the reign of Marcus Antoninus, the Christians in Gaul suffered a terrible persecution, particularly at Vienne and Lyons, whence they sent an affecting narrative to their brethren in Asia. In this Epistle, of which Eusebius has preserved the greater part, there are exact references to the Gospels of Luke and John, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles to the Romans, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 Timothy, 1 Peter, 1 John, and the Revelation of Saint John. ‡ In this persecution Pothinus Bishop of Lyons was put to death; he was succeeded by,

6. IRENÆUS (A. D. 178), who gives positive testimony to the books of the New Testament, affirming that the narratives contained in the Gospels are the same narratives which were related by the apostles. He distinctly specifies the number of the Gospels to be *four*, and only four, and describes their authors, and the occasions on which they were severally written; and he distinctly quotes the Acts and all the other books of the New Testament. Beside these books, Irenæus acknowledges no others to be divine; and though he frequently cites the productions of the apostolic fathers, and of Justin Martyr, with great commendation, he never displays the veneration for them which he shows for the writings of the evangelists and apostles. As Irenæus was a disciple of Polycarp, who had conversed with the apostles themselves, and wrote in defence of the Christian faith in opposition to the heretics who

* Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 29. Less, pp. 108, 109. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 135—140; 4to, vol. i. pp. 353—355.

† Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 141—145; 4to, vol. i. pp. 355—358.

‡ Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 1—4. Less, pp. 140—142. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 148—153; 4to, vol. i. pp. 360—362.

were contemporary with him, his testimony is of peculiar weight and importance. *

In the same century with Irenæus flourished Miltiades, Pantænus, Theophilus of Antioch, and Athenagoras. The writings of the two first, which, according to Eusebius, bore ample testimony to the authenticity of the Scriptures, are unfortunately lost, but of the two last we have some valuable remains, which we are now to notice.

7. ATHENAGORAS, a philosopher and a native of Athens, is the most polished and elegant author of Christian antiquity. In his apology for the Christians, presented to the emperor Marcus Antoninus, and in his Treatise on the Resurrection of the Dead, he has indisputably quoted the Gospels of Matthew and John, the Epistles to the Romans, and the two Epistles to the Corinthians. †

8. THEOPHILUS Bishop of Antioch, in his three books to Autolycus, could only mention the Scriptures occasionally, from the particular object he had in view: but he has evident allusions to the Gospels of Matthew and John, the Epistle to the Romans, and the first Epistle to Timothy. ‡

9. CLEMENT of Alexandria, who followed Irenæus at the distance of sixteen years, gives an account of the order in which the four Gospels were written, and quotes almost all the books of the New Testament, so often by name, and so amply, that to extract his citations would fill a large portion of this volume. As he was a pupil of Origen's, and travelled in quest of authentic information, and did not give his assent to the Scriptures until he had accurately examined them, his testimony to their authenticity possesses the greater weight. §

10. In the same age with Clement flourished TERTULLIAN, a presbyter of the church of Carthage, who was born A. D. 160, and died about the year 220. His works are filled with quotations by *name*, and with long extracts from all the writings of the New Testament, except the Epistle of James, the second Epistle of Peter, and the second and third Epistles of John. Dr. Lardner has observed, that the quotations from the small

* Less, pp. 109—117. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 153—180; 4to, vol. i. pp. 363—377.

† Less, pp. 117—122. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 180—187; 4to, vol. i. pp. 377—381.

‡ Less, pp. 122—125. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 190—202; 4to, vol. i. pp. 383—389.

§ Less, pp. 125—128. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 206—243; 4to, vol. i. pp. 392—412.

volume of the New Testament, by Tertullian, are both longer and more numerous than the quotations are from all the works of Cicero, in writers of all characters, for several ages *. Before we introduce the complete catalogues which Origen and Eusebius have left us of those writings, which the Christians of the first century held to be the genuine works of the evangelists and apostles, and venerated as divine books, we may briefly notice, that, during the first thirty years of the third century, there are extant fragments of several writers, in all of which there is some reference to the books of the New Testament. Thus Caius, surnamed Romanus, who was a presbyter of the church of Rome †, quotes all the epistles of Saint Paul as his genuine productions, except the epistle to the Hebrews, which he has omitted to enumerate among the rest. Hippolytus Portuensis also has several references to most of the books of the New Testament. ‡ Ammonius composed a Harmony of the Four Gospels §, and Julius Africanus endeavoured to remove the apparent contradictions in the genealogy of Jesus Christ as delivered by the evangelists Matthew and Luke. ||

Of all the fathers who flourished in the *third* century, the most learned and laborious unquestionably was ORIGEN, who was born in Egypt A. D. 184 or 185, and died about the year 253. It is said of him, that he did not so much recommend Christianity by what he preached or wrote, as by the general tenour of his life. So great, indeed, was the estimation in which he was held even among the Heathen philosophers, that they dedicated their writings to him, and submitted them to his revisal. ** Of the critical labours of Origen upon the Scriptures, we have already treated at considerable length † †; but, besides these (which in themselves form a decisive testimony to the authenticity of the Scriptures), he wrote a three-fold exposition of all the books of Scripture, scholia or short notes, tomes or extensive commentaries, in which he employed all his learning, critical, sacred, and pro-

* Less, pp. 128—134. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 250—287; 4to, vol. i. pp. 416—436.

† Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 20. Less, p. 150. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 372—379; 4to, vol. i. pp. 481—484.

‡ Less, pp. 150—153. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 397—413; 4to, vol. i. pp. 495—503.

§ Less, pp. 153, 154. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 413—430; 4to, vol. i. pp. 503—513.

|| Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 7. Less, *ibid.* Lardner, vol. ii. pp. 431—441; 4to, vol. i. pp. 513—518.

** Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 19.

†† See Vol. I. pp. 272—276, *supra*.

fane, and a variety of tracts or homilies to the people. Although a small portion only of his works has come down to us, yet in them he uniformly bears testimony to the authenticity of the New Testament, as we now have it; and is the first writer who has given us a perfect catalogue of those books which Christians unanimously (or at least the greater part of them) have considered as the genuine and divinely inspired writings of the apostles. *

Gregory Bishop of Neo-Cæsarea †, and Dionysius Bishop of Alexandria ‡, were pupils of Origen; so that their testimonies to the New Testament, which are very numerous, are in fact but repetitions of his. In the writings of Cyprian Bishop of Carthage, who flourished a few years after Origen, and suffered martyrdom A. D. 258, we have most copious quotations from almost all the books of the New Testament.

During the next forty years, the imperfect remains of numerous writers || are still extant, in which they either cite the historical Scriptures of the New Testament, or speak of them in terms of profound respect; but the testimony of Victorinus Bishop of Pettaw in Germany is particularly worthy of notice, on account of the remoteness of his situation from that of Origen and Cyprian, who were Africans. Victorinus wrote commentaries on various books of the Old Testament, an exposition of some passages of Saint Matthew's Gospel, a commentary on the Apocalypse, and various controversial treatises against the heretics of his day; in which we have valuable and most explicit testimonies to almost every book of the New Testament. **

About the year 300, Arnobius, a teacher of rhetoric at Sicca in Africa † †, and Lactantius his pupil ‡ ‡, composed, among other works, elaborate vindications of the Christian religion, which prove their acquaintance with the writings of the New Testament, although they did not cite them by name, because

* Less, pp. 155—162. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 442—544; 4to, vol. i. pp. 519—575.

† Lardner, 8vo, vol. iii. pp. 25—57; 4to, vol. i. pp. 591—608.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. iii. pp. 57—132; 4to, vol. i. pp. 609—650.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. iii. pp. 133—183; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 3—30.

|| As Novatus, Rome, A. D. 251; Dionysius, Rome, A. D. 259; Commodian, A. D. 270; Anatolius, Laodicea, A. D. 270; Theognostus, A. D. 282; Methodius, Lycia, A. D. 290; and Phileas Bishop of Thurius in Egypt, A. D. 296. Accounts of these writers, and extracts from their testimonies to the New Testament, are collected and given at length by Dr. Lardner, (Works, vol. iii. 8vo, or vol. ii. 4to).

** Lardner, 8vo, vol. iii. pp. 286—303; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 88—98.

† † Ibid. 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 1—24; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 244—257.

‡ ‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 24—87; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 257—292.

they addressed their works to the Gentiles. Lactantius indeed assigns this very reason for his reserve; notwithstanding which, Dr. Lardner remarks, “he seems to show that the Christians of that time were so habituated to the language of Scripture, that it was not easy for them to avoid the use of it, whenever they discoursed upon things of a religious nature.”

Nearly contemporary with these writers was Eusebius Bishop of Cæsarea, who flourished in the year 315—a man of extraordinary learning, diligence, and judgment, and singularly studious in the Scriptures. He received the books of the New Testament nearly as we have them, and in his various writings has produced quotations from all, or nearly all, of them. His chief work is his Ecclesiastical History, in which he records the history of Christianity from its commencement to his own time; and having diligently read the works of Christian antiquity, for the express purpose of ascertaining what writings had been received as the genuine productions of the Apostles and Evangelists, in the third, fourth, and twenty-fourth chapters of his third book, he has particularly treated on the various books of the New Testament; and in the twenty-fifth chapter he has delivered, not his own private opinion, but the *opinion of the church* ἐκκλησιαστικὴ παραδωσις, the sum of what he had found in the writings of the primitive Christians. As the result of his inquiries, he reduces the books of the New Testament into the three following classes.

I. Ὁμολογούμεναι γράφαι (ἀνωμολογημέναι; or ἀληθεῖς καὶ ἀπλάστοι) that is, writings which were *universally* received as the genuine works of the persons whose names they bear. In this class Eusebius reckons, 1. The four Gospels; 2. The Acts of the Apostles; 3. The Epistles of St. Paul; 4. The first Epistle of St. John; 5. The first Epistle of St. Peter. The Revelation of St. John might also *perhaps* be placed in this class, because *some* think its authenticity incontrovertible, yet the *majority* leave the matter undetermined.

II. Ἀντιλεγόμεναι, that is, writings on whose authenticity the antients were *not unanimous*; which some held to be supposititious*. According to Eusebius, even these have the *majority of voices* among the antients in their favour. He expressly calls them γνωρίμα ὅμως τοῖς πολλοῖς; (writings acknowledged *by most* to be genuine), and παραπλεῖστοις τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν γινγνωσκόμενα

* He calls these writings also ψευδαι γράφαι, spurious writings; that is, according to the opinion of some. These ψευδαι do not, therefore, compose a distinct class, as is the general supposition.

(received by the majority). A few doubted of their authenticity; and therefore Eusebius ranks them under the contested *ἀντιλεγόμενα* or *νόθα*.

In this class he enumerates, of the writings of the New Testament, 1. The Epistle of St. James; 2. The Epistle of St. Jude; 3. The second Epistle of St. Peter; 4. The second and third Epistles of St. John. The Revelation of St. John, he adds, is also by some placed in this class *. And, of other writings, the Acts of St. Paul; The Shepherd of Hermas; The Revelation of St. Peter; the Epistle of Barnabas; The Doctrines of the Apostles; and the Gospel according to the Hebrews.

III. *Αἰόπαι καὶ δυσσεβῆς*, (absurd and impious); that is, writings which had been *universally rejected as evidently spurious*. In this class he includes the Gospels of Peter, of Thomas, and of Matthias; the Acts of Andrew, of John, and of other Apostles. These writings, says he, contain evident errors, are written in a style entirely different from that of the Apostles, and have not been thought worthy of being mentioned by any one of the antients. †

In the fourth century we have numerous witnesses to prove that the books of the New Testament existed at that time; but, as it would extend this chapter to too great a length, were we to detail them all, it may suffice to remark, that we have not fewer than TEN distinct catalogues of these books. Six agree exactly with our present canon; namely, the lists of Athanasius (A. D. 315) ‡ Epiphanius (A. D. 370) §, Jerome (A. D. 382) || Rufinus (A. D. 390) **, Augustine †† Bishop of Hippo in Africa (A. D. 394), and of the forty-four bishops assembled in the third council of Carthage (at which Augustine was present A. D. 397). †† Of the other four catalogues, those of Cyril Bishop of Jerusalem §§ (A. D. 340), the bishops at the council of Laodicea ||| A. D. 364), and of Gregory Nazianzen Bishop of Con-

* For in early times some believed that this work was not composed by John the Apostle, but by a presbyter of the same name, or by some other person.

† Less, .162—172. Lardner, 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 200—275; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 355—395.

‡ Lardner, 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 280—294; 4to, pp. 398—406.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 311—319; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 416—420.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. v. pp. 1—74; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 531—572.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. v. pp. 75—78; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 572—574.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. v. pp. 81—123; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 576—599.

‡‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. v. pp. 79, 80; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 574, 575.

§§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 299—303; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 409—411.

||| Canon 59. The canons of this council were, not long afterwards, received into the body of the canons of the universal church. Lardner, 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 308—311; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 414—416.

stantinople (A. D. 375) * are the same with our canon, excepting that the Revelation is omitted; and Philaster, or Philastrius †, Bishop of Brixia or Brescia (A. D. 380), in his list, omits the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Revelation, though he acknowledges both these books in other parts of his works. From this time, that is, from the fourth century downwards, the works of Christian writers are so full of references to the New Testament, that it becomes unnecessary to adduce their testimonies, especially as they would only prove that the books of Scripture *never* lost their character or authority with the Christian church.

In reviewing the body of evidence that has now been stated, it is a consideration of great importance, that the witnesses lived at different times, and in countries widely remote from one another; Clement flourished at Rome, Ignatius at Antioch, Polycarp at Smyrna, Justin Martyr in Syria, Irenæus in France, Athenagoras at Athens, Theophilus at Antioch, Clement and Origen at Alexandria, Tertullian at Carthage, and Augustine at Hippo, both in Africa, and, to mention no more, Eusebius at Cæsarea. Philosophers, rhetoricians, and divines, men of acuteness and learning, all concur to prove that the books of the New Testament were equally well known in distant countries, and received as authentic, by men who had no intercourse with one another.

The evidence for the authenticity of the New Testament, to be derived from the heretical writers of the first three centuries, is still more important than even that of the orthodox fathers. It was the practice of the former, not only to falsify or misrepresent particular passages, but to erase such as were not reconcileable with their peculiar tenets. Now this very circumstance, as Michaelis ‡ most forcibly observes, is a positive proof that they considered the New Testament to be a genuine work of the apostles. They might deny an apostle to be an infallible teacher, and therefore banish his writings from the sacred canon; but they no where contend that the apostle is not the author of the book or books which bear his name.

Thus Cerinthus (who was contemporary with Saint John) maintained the necessity of circumcision, and the observance of the Mosaic law; and because Saint Paul delivered a con-

* Lardner, 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 406—411; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 469—472.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 499—501; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 522, 523.

‡ Introd. to New Test. vol. i. p. 35.

trary doctrine in his Epistles, which are cited, Cerinthus and his followers denied that he was a divine apostle. Saint Paul's epistles therefore—the very same that we now have—were extant in the first century, and were acknowledged to be his by the Cerinthians. And as this sect received and approved Saint Matthew's Gospel because it did not contradict their tenets, it is consequently evident that his Gospel was likewise extant in the first century. *

Again, in the same age, the Ebionites rejected all Saint Paul's Epistles, and called him an apostate, because he departed from the Levitical law; and they adopted the Gospel of Saint Matthew, which however they corrupted by various alterations and additions. This proves that Saint Matthew's Gospel was then published, and that Saint Paul's Epistles were then known. †

But, among the heretics who erased and altered passages of Scripture, to make it agree with their doctrines, we may, as an instance, produce Marcion, who flourished in the beginning of the second century. He lived therefore in an age, when he could easily have discovered if the writings of the New Testament had been forged; and as he was greatly incensed against the orthodox Christians, who had excommunicated him, if such a forgery had been committed, most unquestionably he would not have failed to make a discovery that would have afforded him the most ample means of triumph. He had likewise the experience derived from an acquaintance with foreign countries, having travelled from Sinope, his native place, to Rome (where he afterwards resided), in order to procure a repeal of the sentence of excommunication that had been denounced against him. But, throughout the vast intermediate country between those two places, he was unable to discover the smallest trace of the New Testament's being a forgery. Thus frustrated, he affirmed that Saint Matthew's Gospel, the Epistle to the Hebrews, with those of Saint Peter and James, as well as the Old Testament in general, were writings, not for Christians, but for Jews. He published a new edition of Saint Luke, and the first ten epistles of Saint Paul, in which Epiphanius has charged him with altering every passage that contradicted his own opinions: but, as many of these are what modern critics call various readings, this assertion of Epiphanius must be received with caution. The conduct of Mar-

* For an account of the Cerinthians, see Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 28.* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ix. pp. 319—330; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 564—571.

† Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 27.* Michaelis, vol. i. p. 37.

cion, however, proves that the above-mentioned books of the New Testament did then exist, and were acknowledged to be the works of the authors whose names they bear. The testimony, to be drawn from this view of the subject, in favour of the books of the New Testament, is very strong. In consequence of Marcion's rejecting some books *entirely*, and mutilating others, the antient Christians were led to examine into the evidence for these sacred writings, and to collate copies of them, and on this account to speak very frequently in their works, as well of whole books as of particular passages; and thus we, who live in a later age, are enabled to authenticate these books, and to arrive at the genuine reading of many texts, in a better manner than we otherwise could have done. *

It were easy to adduce other instances from the antient heretics, if the preceding were insufficient; we therefore conclude this head of evidence with the following, summary of the learned and accurate Dr. Lardner. †—"Noëtus," says he, "Paul of Samosata, Sabellius, Marcellus, Photinus, the Novatians, Donatists, Manicheans, Priscillianists, besides Artemon, the Audians, the Arians ‡, and divers others, all received most, or all of the same books of the New Testament which the Catholics received; and agreed in the same respect for them, as being written by apostles, or their disciples and companions." We now come to the evidence of Jewish and Heathen adversaries in favour of the authenticity of the New Testament, which is equally important with the testimonies of antient heretics. Dr. Lardner has made a very ample collection of these evidences §, in which he has quoted every thing relative to Jewish and Heathen antiquity. As the testimonies of Philo and Josephus, among the Jewish writers, to the facts recorded in the New Testament, have been very frequently quoted in the first part of this work ||, we shall here only observe, that the authors of the Talmudical books acknowledge the principal transactions of Christ's life; for they durst not contradict, nor even pretend to doubt of, facts so universally known. But they absurdly imputed them to his having the

* For an ample account of Marcion and his tenets, see Dr. Lardner's History of Heretics, c. 10. Works, 8vo, vol. ix. pp. 358—415; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 588—624. Michaelis, vol. i. pp. 37—39.

† In the General Review of his Credibility of the Gospel History. Works, 8vo, vol. v. p. 349; 4to, vol. iii. p. 96.

‡ For accounts of these various sects, see their respective titles in the fifth index to Dr. Lardner's works.

§ Works, 8vo, vols. vii—ix; 4to, vols. iii. and iv.

|| See Vol. I. pp. 7, *et seq.* 569—575.

true writing of the name of JEHOVAH in his possession, which, they affirmed, he stole out of the temple. With regard to the testimonies afforded by Heathen authors, we may remark that, from a very early period of Christianity, writers can be produced who considered the New Testament as the work of the apostles and evangelists: and Chrysostom remarks, with equal force and justice *, that Celsus and Porphyry, two enemies of the Christian religion, are powerful witnesses for the antiquity of the New Testament, since they could not have argued against the tenets of the Gospel, if it had not existed in that early period.

1. CELSUS flourished towards the close of the second century. He not only mentions by name, but also quotes passages from the books of the New Testament, so that it is certain we have the identical books to which he referred. In no one instance did he question the Gospels as books of history; on the contrary, he admitted many of the facts related in them, and in particular he acknowledged the truth of the Gospel miracles as facts; though he by no means allowed that Jesus performed them by divine power; and he has borne testimony to the persecutions suffered by the Christians for their faith. He accuses the Christians of altering the Gospels, which refers to the alterations made by the Marcionites, Valentinians, and other heretics: and it is very material to remark, that this acute adversary of Christianity professed to draw his arguments from the writings received by its professors, especially the four Gospels, and that in no instance did he derive any of his objections from spurious writings. †

2. The testimony of PORPHYRY is still more important than that of Celsus. He was born A. D. 233, of Tyrian origin; but, unfortunately for the present age, the mistaken zeal of Constantine and other Christian emperors, in causing his writings against Christianity to be destroyed, has deprived us of the opportunity of knowing the full extent of his objections against the Christian faith. It is, says Michaelis, universally allowed that Porphyry is the most sensible as well as severe adversary of the Christian religion that antiquity can produce. He

* In his sixth homily on 1 Cor. (Op. tom. x. p. 47. Michaelis, vol. i. p. 39. Lardner 8vo, vol. viii. p. 7; 4to, vol. iv. p. 114.

† As the works of Celsus have long since perished, the nature of his objections can only be known from Origen's reply to him; of which the best edition was published by Dr. Spencer at Cambridge in 1677. From this treatise Dr. Lardner has drawn up his account of the objections of Celsus. (Works, 8vo, vol. viii. pp. 5—69; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 113—149.)

was versed not only in political, but also in philosophical history, as appears from his lives of the philosophers. His acquaintance with the Christians was not confined to a single country, but he had conversed with them in Tyre, in Sicily, and in Rome: his residence in Basan afforded him the best opportunity of a strict intercourse with the Nazarenes, who adopted only the Hebrew Gospel of Saint Matthew; and his thirst for philosophical inquiry must have induced him to examine the cause of their rejecting the other writings of the New Testament, whether it was that they considered them as spurious, or that, like the Ebionites, they regarded them as a genuine work of the apostles, though not divinely inspired. Enabled by his birth to study the Syriac as well as the Greek authors, he was, of all the adversaries of the Christian religion, the best qualified for inquiring into the authenticity of the sacred writings. He possessed, therefore, every advantage which natural abilities or political situation could afford, to discover whether the New Testament was a genuine work of the apostles and evangelists, or whether it was imposed upon the world after the decease of its pretended authors. But no trace of this suspicion is any where to be found, nor did it ever occur to Porphyry to suppose that it was spurious.

The prophecy of Daniel he made no scruple to pronounce a forgery, and written after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes: his critical penetration enabled him to discover the perfect coincidence between the predictions and the events; and, denying divine inspiration, he found no other means of solving the problem. In support of this hypothesis, he uses an argument which is an equal proof of his learning and sagacity, though his objection does not affect the authority of the prophet; viz. from a Greek paranomasia which he discovered in the history of Daniel and Susanna*, he concludes the book to have been written originally in Greek, and afterwards translated into Hebrew†. Is it credible, then, that so sagacious an inquirer could have failed to have discovered a forgery with respect to the

* We have already had occasion to notice this paranomasia or play upon words. See p. 300, note *, *supra*, of this volume.

† Michaelis, vol. i. p. 44. Porphyry's objections against the prophet Daniel have been considered, *supra*, pp. 298, 299. The objection above noticed, drawn from the story of Susanna, Bishop Marsh very justly remarks, does not affect that prophet's authority, because it relates to a part that is acknowledged to be spurious, or at least never existed in Hebrew; and is for that reason separated from the prophecy of Daniel in the modern editions of the Septuagint, though, in the Greek manuscripts and the Romish editions of the Latin Bible, it forms part of the book of Daniel. Ibid. p. 368. Dr. Lardner has given an ample account of Porphyry, (Works, 8vo, vol. viii. pp. 176—248; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 209—250.

New Testament, had a forgery existed—a discovery which would have given him the completest triumph, by striking at once a mortal blow at the religion which he attempted to destroy? So far, however, is this from being the case, that Porphyry not only did not deny the truth of the Gospel history, but actually considered the miracles of Jesus Christ as real facts *. The writings of the antient Christians, who answered his objections, likewise afford general evidence, that Porphyry made numerous observations on the Scriptures.

3. One hundred years after Porphyry, flourished the emperor Julian (A. D. 331—363), surnamed the apostate, from his renunciation of Christianity after he mounted the imperial throne. Though he resorted to the most artful political means for undermining Christianity, yet, as a writer against it, he was every way inferior to Porphyry. In various extracts from his work against the Christians, transcribed by Jerome and Cyril, it is evident that he did not deny the truth of the Gospel history, as a history, though he denied the deity of Jesus Christ asserted in the writings of the evangelists; he acknowledged the principal facts in the Gospels, as well as the miracles of our Saviour and his apostles. Referring to the difference between the genealogies recorded by Matthew and Luke, he noticed them by name, and recited the sayings of Christ in the very words of the evangelists: he also bore testimony to the Gospel of John being composed later than the other evangelists, and at a time when great numbers were converted to the Christian faith, both in Italy and Greece; and alluded oftener than once to facts recorded in the Acts of the Apostles †. By thus quoting the four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, and by quoting no other books, Julian shows that these were the *only* historical books received by the Christians as of authority, and as containing authentic memoirs of Jesus Christ and his apostles, together with the doctrines taught by them. “But Julian’s testimony does something more than represent the judgment of the Christian church in his time. It discovers also his own. He himself expressly states the early date of these records; he calls them by the names which they now bear. He all along supposes, he no where attempts to question their genuineness.

* See this proved in Dr. Macknight’s *Truth of the Gospel History*, pp. 318. 328. 335. 337.

† See an ample account of Julian and his writings in Dr. Lardner’s *Works*, 8vo, vol. viii. pp. 356—425; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 311—350. Dr. Macknight has also given an abstract, less copious than Dr. Lardner’s, of Julian’s objections, in his “*Truth of the Gospel History*,” pp. 320, 321. 329. 336, 337.

“The argument in favour of the books of the New Testament, drawn from the notice taken of their contents by the early writers against the Christian religion, is very considerable. It proves that the accounts, which Christians had then, were the accounts which we have now; that our present Scriptures were theirs. It proves, moreover, that neither Celsus in the second, Porphyry in the third, nor Julian in the fourth century, suspected the authenticity of these books, or ever insinuated that Christians were mistaken in the authors to whom they ascribed them. Not one of them expressed an opinion upon this subject different from that which was holden by Christians. And when we consider how much it would have availed them to have cast a doubt upon this point, if they could; and how ready they showed themselves to be, to take every advantage in their power; and that they were all men of learning and inquiry; their concession, or rather their suffrage, upon the subject, is extremely valuable.” *

4. Another importance for the antiquity of the New Testament is offered in the ANTIENT VERSIONS of it in other languages. Some of these, as the Syriac and several Latin translations, were made so early as the close of the first, or at the commencement of the second century. But, as the history and uses of antient versions have already been considered †, we shall here only remark, that the New Testament must necessarily have existed previously to the making of those versions; and that a book, which was so early and so universally read throughout the East in the Syriac, and throughout Europe and Africa in the Latin translation, must be able to lay claim to a high antiquity.

V. The result of all these inquiries, direct and collateral, internal as well as external, is, that the books at present extant in the New Testament are genuine and authentic, and are the same writings which were originally composed by the authors whose names they bear. That they have descended to us *uncorrupted* in any thing material, we have evidence equally decisive and satisfactory—such evidence indeed as can be produced for no other production of antiquity.

The *uncorrupted preservation* of the books of the New Testament is manifest,

1. *From their contents.* So early as the two first centuries of the Christian æra, we find the very same *facts*, and the very

* Paley's Evidences, vol. i. p. 87.

† See Vol. I. pp. 296—306, *supra*, for a history of the antient versions.

same *doctrines*, universally received by the Christians, which we of the present day believe on the credit of the New Testament.

2. *Because an universal corruption of these writings was impossible; nor can the least vestige of such a corruption be found in history.* From the very first ages of Christianity, being written for the use of the Christian churches, they were read in their religious assemblies as a part of their public worship, just as Moses and the prophets were read in the Jewish synagogues *. Nor would the use of them be confined to public worship. When the books of the New Testament were first published to the world, the Christians would naturally entertain the highest esteem and reverence for writings that delivered an *authentic* and inspired history of the life and doctrines of Jesus Christ, and would be desirous of possessing such an invaluable treasure. Hence, as we learn from unquestionable authority, copies were multiplied and disseminated as rapidly as the boundaries of the church increased; and translations were made into as many languages as were spoken by its professors, some of which remain to this day; so that it would very soon be rendered absolutely impossible to corrupt these books in any one important word or phrase.

Further, harmonies of them were antiently constructed, commentaries were written upon them (many of which are still extant), manuscripts were collated, and editions of the New Testament were put forth. These sacred records, being universally regarded as the supreme standard of truth, were quoted by every class of Christians with peculiar respect, as being divine compositions, and possessing an authority belonging to no other books. Whatever controversies, therefore, arose among different sects (and the church was very early rent with fierce contentions on doctrinal points), the Scriptures of the New Testament were received and appealed to by every one of them, as being conclusive in all matters of controversy; consequently it was morally impossible, that any man or body of men should corrupt or falsify them in any fundamental article, should foist into them a single expression to favour their peculiar tenets, or erase a single sentence, without being detected by thousands.

3. *From the agreement of all the manuscripts.* The manuscripts of the New Testament, which are still extant, are far more numerous than those of any other book in the world:

* Dr. Lardner has collected numerous instances, references to which may be seen in the index to his works, article *Scriptures*. See particularly the testimonies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, and Augustine.

upwards of three hundred and fifty were collated by Griesbach for his celebrated edition. These manuscripts, indeed, are not all entire; most of them contain only the Gospels; others, the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles; and a few contain the Apocalypse. But they were all written in very different and distant parts of the world; several of them are upwards of twelve hundred years old, and give us the books of the New Testament, in all essential points, perfectly accordant with each other, as any person may readily ascertain by examining the critical editions published by Mill, Kuster, Bengel, Wetstein, and Griesbach.* The *thirty thousand* various readings, which are said to be found in the manuscripts collated by Dr. Mill, and the *hundred and fifty thousand* which Griesbach's edition is said to contain, in no degree whatever affect the general credit and integrity of the text. In fact, the more copies are multiplied, and the more numerous the transcripts and translations from the original, the more likely is it, that the genuine text and the true original reading will be investigated and ascertained. The most correct and accurate antient classics now extant are those, of which we have the greatest number of manuscripts; and the most *depraved, mutilated, and inaccurate* editions of the old writers are those, of which we have the fewest manuscripts, and perhaps only a single manuscript, extant. Such are Athenæus, Clemens Romanus, Hesychius, and Photius. But of this formidable mass of various readings, which have been collected by the diligence of collators, not one tenth—nay, not one hundredth part makes any perceptible, or at least any material, alteration in the sense. They consist almost wholly of palpable errors in transcription, grammatical and verbal differences, such as the insertion or omission of an article, the substitution of a word for its equivalent, and the transposition of a word or two in a sentence. Even the few that do change the sense, affect it only in passages relating to unimportant, historical, and geographical circumstances, or other collateral matters; and the still smaller number that make any alteration in things of consequence, do not on that account place us in any absolute uncertainty. For, either the true reading may be discovered by collating the other manuscripts, versions, and quotations found in the works of the antients; or, should these fail to give us the requisite information, we are enabled to explain the doctrine in question from other *undisputed* passages of holy writ. This observation particularly applies to the

* An account of a few of the principal manuscripts of the New Testament is given *infra*, in the Appendix, No. IV.; and of Mill's, Kuster's, Bengel's, Wetstein's, and Griesbach's editions in No. V.

doctrines of the deity of Jesus Christ and of the Trinity; which some persons of late years have attempted to expunge from the New Testament, because a few controverted passages have been cited in proof of them; but these doctrines are written, as with a sun-beam, in other parts of the New Testament. The very worst manuscript extant would not pervert one article of our faith, or destroy one moral precept. The general uniformity, therefore, of the manuscripts of the New Testament, which are dispersed through all the countries in the known world, and in so great a variety of languages, is truly astonishing, and demonstrates both the veneration in which the Scriptures have uniformly been held, and the singular care which was taken in transcribing them; and so far are the various readings contained in these manuscripts from being hostile to the uncorrupted preservation of the books of the New Testament (as some sceptics have boldly affirmed, and some timid Christians have apprehended), that they afford us, on the contrary, an additional and most convincing proof that they exist at present, in all essential points, precisely the same as they were when they left the hands of their authors.

4. *From the agreement of the old versions, and quotations from the New Testament, which are made in the writings of the primitive Christians of the first three centuries, and in those of succeeding fathers of the church.*

The testimony of versions, and the evidence of the ecclesiastical fathers, have already been noticed as a proof of the antiquity and authenticity of the New Testament*. The quotations from the New Testament in the writings of the fathers are so numerous, that (as it has been frequently observed) the whole body of the Gospels and Epistles might be compiled from the various passages dispersed in their commentaries and other writings. And though these citations were, in many instances, made from memory, yet, being always made with due attention to the sense and meaning, and most commonly with a regard to the words as well as to the *order* of the words, they correspond with the original records from which they were extracted:—an irrefragable argument this, of the purity and integrity with which the New Testament has been preserved. Nor do we hazard too much in saying, that if all the antient writings now extant in Europe were collected together, the bulk of them would by no means be comparable to that of the quotations taken from the New Testament alone; so that a man might, with more semblance of reason, dispute whether the writings

* See pp. 348—356. and 363 of this volume.

ascribed to Homer, Demosthenes, Virgil, or Cæsar, are in the main such as they left them, than he could question whether those of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, and Paul, are really their productions. *

* Ernesti, Inst. Interp. Nov. Test. pp. 151—156. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 650—672; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 459—470. Stosch, De Canone, pp. 85, *et seq.* Moldenhawer, Introd. ad Lib. Bibl. pp. 196—198. Less, pp. 243—266. Dr. Harwood's Introd. to the New Test. vol. i. pp. 120—126. Michaelis, vol. i. pp. 23—69, and vol. ii. pp. 362—374. Dr. Nares's Remarks on the Unitarian Version of the New Testament, pp. xxix. xxx. 258, 259.

SECTION II.

ON THE CREDIBILITY AND INSPIRATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

I. *The Credibility of the New Testament proved*;—II. *On the Nature and Extent of the Inspiration of the Apostles and Evangelists.*

I. SATISFACTORY as the preceding considerations are, in demonstrating the genuineness, authenticity, and uncorrupted preservation of the books of the New Testament as ancient writings, yet they are not of themselves sufficient to determine their *credibility*. An author may write of events which have happened in his time and in the place of his residence, but should he be either credulous or a fanatic, or should we have reason to suspect his honesty, his evidence is of no value. In order, therefore, to establish the credibility of an author, we must examine more closely into his particular character, and inquire whether he possessed abilities sufficient to scrutinize the truth, and honesty enough faithfully to relate it as it happened. Now the historical writers of the New Testament are distinguished also from all others whose credibility has never been called in question by any reasonable man, in this respect—that if historical subjects were capable of mathematical demonstration, we must acknowledge that their credibility has been not only morally proved, but even demonstrated mathematically.

1. *They were immediate witnesses*, and had sufficient means of acquiring correct information respecting the events they record. The chief writers of the New Testament are Matthew, John, Peter, James, and Jude, all Jews by birth, and resident at Jerusalem, the scene of the history which they relate. They were all the immediate disciples of Jesus Christ, and eye-wit-

nesses of his miracles, as well as of the wonderful effects produced by his discourses on the people. Mark, it is well known, composed his Gospel under the immediate inspection of Peter, and Luke composed his Gospel under the immediate inspection of Saint Paul, who was converted by Christ himself, after his ascension into heaven, in a most miraculous manner, (Acts ix. 1—9). Their histories, therefore, are of as great authority as if they had been written by the above-mentioned eye-witnesses.

2. *They were competent witnesses of the facts which they attested*, and on which the Christian religion is founded. Their testimony did not relate to certain abstract points, in forming a judgment of which they might have been misled by the sophistry of others, or have erred through their own inadvertence and incapacity; nor to events which had happened before their birth, or in a distant region of the earth, concerning which, therefore, they might have received false information. It respected facts which they had witnessed with their eyes and with their ears. They had lived with Christ during his ministry, they had heard his discourses, and seen his wonderful works, and consequently received them on the testimony of their own senses. On this opportunity for ascertaining the truth of those things which they published to others, one of these writers lays a very great and reasonable stress.—“*That,*” says he, “*which was from the beginning*” (of Christ’s ministry), *which we have HEARD, which we have SEEN with our eyes, and our HANDS have HANDLED of the word of life*” (Christ and his Gospel) “*that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you.*” (1 John i. 1—3). If Plato has been deemed a competent witness, and in every respect qualified to compose the biographical account of his master Socrates, and of his discourses in prison before he drank off the poisoned bowl, because he was present on those occasions,—surely the evangelical writers were equally competent witnesses of the facts which they relate!

3. *They were not enthusiasts or fanatics.* The characteristics of enthusiasm or fanaticism are—a blind credulity, in consequence of which its subject is led to imagine himself always to be the favourite of Heaven, and actuated by divine inspiration;—disorder and contradiction in the religious system proposed by the enthusiast;—and obscurity and absurdity in his exposition of it, accompanied with dictatorial positiveness, requiring an implicit credence of his pretensions, or at least on grounds as vain and delusive as those which have satisfied himself;—a morose, unsocial, and severe system of morality;—and contempt of all written revelation. But none of these characteristics is

to be traced in the character or writings of the apostles. They became the disciples of Jesus Christ upon rational conviction—not upon internal persuasion alone, but on clear and stupendous miracles, proofs submitted to their senses, and approved by their reason, which enthusiasm could not have counterfeited, and never would have required; and at every step of their progress, as their faith was called to signalize itself by new exertions, or to sustain new trials, it was fortified by new proofs. The slowness and caution with which the apostles received the fact of their Lord's resurrection from the dead, fully exempt them from all suspicion of being the dupes of delusion and credulity. Throughout their various writings, the utmost impartiality, sobriety, modesty, and humility, prevail. The style of fanatics is ever obscure, arrogant, and violent. The style of the New Testament is the very reverse of this. The utmost harmony exists through every part of the system of religion inculcated by its authors. The *historical* books are plain, calm, and unexaggerated; detailing the facts that establish the unparalleled perfection of their divine Lord with the particularity and consistency of truth. Some trifling discrepancies, it is true, are found in the collateral circumstances related by the historians of Jesus Christ (and this is an evident proof that they did not copy one from another); but in all essential matters they entirely and perfectly agree; and though scarcely one among them had read, or could have read, the writings of the others, yet their histories and doctrines are perfectly accordant. And the *epistles*—though written at different and distant times, on various occasions, from different places, and addressed to very different communities and persons—never contradict each other. On the contrary, they are, uniformly, in the highest degree natural, rational, and affectionate, admirably adapted to the occasions which produced them, and the relations which their several writers bore to the various churches and persons whom they addressed:—"instructing their ignorance, and encouraging their virtues—rebuking their offences without bitterness—vindicating their own characters from calumny, without betraying any excessive resentment—and maintaining their own authority, as religious instructors and guides, without any trace of spiritual pride, any arrogant claims to full perfection of virtue." So far are they from inculcating a gloomy devotion, or a morose, unsocial, or selfish system of morality, that, while they insist on the necessity of sincere, fervent, and heartfelt piety to God, without any affectation of rapturous ecstasy or extravagant fervour—a piety, in short, chastened and controlled by humility and discretion—they at the same time inculcate the strictest

equity and justice in our intercourse with our fellow-men together with the purest, most active, and most diffusive benevolence. While the just pre-eminence is allowed to internal sincerity, outward rites and observances have their due importance preserved; every grace, and every virtue, that can form a part of the Christian character, has its just order and value assigned to it in the Christian scheme; every civil relative and social duty is taught in the clearest manner, and enforced by the strongest motives. So far are the authors of the New Testament from contemning all written revelation, that in their writings they uniformly evince the greatest reverence for the written revelation of the Old Testament, which they exhort their disciples to study diligently *, and point out its friendly harmony with the Christian system †. And though they insist on the necessity of receiving and believing that system ‡, yet they equally condemn all spirit of persecution § and all religious indifference. ||

4. *They were neither deceived themselves, neither did they deceive others.* We have already remarked **, that the evangelists were eye-witnesses of the facts they recorded; consequently they could not be *deceived* as to the actual occurrence of the facts and miracles related in the Gospels. They had the best possible information, and were fully convinced of their reality. *Neither did they deceive others.* The whole tenor of their lives demonstrated, and even their adversaries confessed, that they were men of piety and integrity. They never would have pretended to persuade their countrymen and contemporaries (nor could they have succeeded in such attempt) that a man whose death was public and notorious, was risen again—that darkness had covered the land at the time of his execution, and that there had been an earthquake at the moment of his decease, if these events had not taken place. Besides, when it is recollected, that the writers in question were men of no education, and of the lowest class in society, it is still less reasonable to imagine that they could pretend to speak foreign languages, and absurdly upbraid an entire and numerous society with mak-

* 2 Tim. iii. 14—17. 2 Pet. i. 19, 20.

† Acts ii. 14—36. xiii. 15—41. Rom. iv. 10. 19—21, &c.

‡ Acts iv. 12. Rom. iii. 20—26.

§ Rom. xiv. 3—23.

|| Dr. Graves's Essay on the Character of the Apostles, to prove that they were not enthusiasts, *passim*; Dr. Less on the Authenticity, &c. of the New Testament, pp. 280—299; by both of whom the topics above glanced at are fully and ably illustrated. Lord Lyttleton has also applied similar considerations to the conversion of Saint Paul, which he has shown to be an irrefragable argument for the truth of the Christian religion. See his "Observations on the Conversion of Saint Paul"—an inestimable little treatise, to which scepticism could never frame a reply.

** See § 1. pp. 367, 368, *supra*.

ing a bad use of the same extraordinary gift, if that society had not received it *. Such pretensions, if false, could never have been admitted; and it were absurd, not to say impossible, that so many men should conspire to propagate a falsehood, especially at a time when even attendance on the ministers of Christ, much less the profession of his faith, exposed them to the severest persecutions and most imminent danger of their lives. Besides, it rarely happens that any one will propagate a deliberate falsehood without having some advantage in view, either immediate or remote. Now the first teachers of Christianity could have no prospect whatever of any advantage. They could expect none from Him in whom they professed to believe. Jesus Christ, indeed, had warned them to expect persecution, ignominy, and death in this world, if they continued to be his disciples. They could not therefore aspire to honours or emoluments, for the distribution of these was in the hands of Jews and Heathens, who reviled and persecuted them with unrelenting severity. Still less could they expect to acquire wealth, for their profession of the Christian faith subjected them to the loss of all things. According to their own principles, either as Jews or Christians, they involved themselves in eternal misery, if they deliberately persevered in propagating falsehoods. Further, if the evangelists and apostles had confederated to impose upon mankind, it is incredible that none of their associates should not have confessed the fraud before the tribunals. It is equally incredible that so many precepts of piety and virtue should have been delivered by men of such abandoned principles, as they must have been, if they had really been impostors; and it is still more incredible that they should have been willing to die for the cause of Christ, who, if he had not risen again from the dead, would have miserably deceived them. Still less is it to be credited that they performed miracles (the reality of which was acknowledged by their enemies) in confirmation of their doctrine. Lastly, if the apostles and evangelists had designed to impose upon mankind, they would have accommodated themselves to the humours of the people whom they addressed; they would have indulged their passions, and would carefully have avoided saying or doing any thing that might shock or offend them. Nothing of the kind was done by the apostles. They did not accommodate themselves to the dispositions of mankind; they boldly impugned the traditions of the Jews, and the religion of the Gentiles; nor would they suffer the law

* As Saint Paul upbraided the church at Corinth. See 1 Cor. xiv.

to be confounded with the Gospel, or the Mosaic ceremonies to be retained. They spared not the corruptions that prevailed in their time; they sought not to clothe their discourses or writings in the attractive garb of human eloquence, nor did they gratify the passions of their hearers. Would persons, deliberately confederating to impose upon the world, have pursued a conduct so little calculated to secure success to their designs? So far, however, were the apostles from being either deceived themselves, or deceivers of others, that,

5. *On the contrary they were men of the strictest integrity.* This is evident from the style and manner of their writings, which are characterized by the most rigid impartiality and fidelity. They never attempt to astonish their readers, but uniformly endeavour to enlighten and convince them: regardless of themselves, they seem engrossed by the great truths which they were commissioned to promulgate. They do not dissemble certain circumstances in the life and sufferings of their Master, which have no tendency to enhance his glory in the eyes of the world. Had they been silent concerning these circumstances, their adversaries assuredly could never have discovered them, nor consequently have taken any advantage of them. They have, however, not failed to relate them with all their minutest circumstances.

Again, when they relate any of the miracles of Jesus Christ, they announce them with the same dispassionate coolness as if they had been common transactions; saying nothing *previously* to raise expectation, nor, after their recital, breaking out into exclamation, but leave the reader to draw his own conclusion. In perusing the simple and unadorned narratives of the evangelists, it is impossible not to feel that the purport of their writing was to 'bear witness to the truth.'

The conduct of the evangelists, when speaking of their enemies, is characterized by the same striking integrity. Of all who were concerned in the persecution and death of Christ, they mention by name only the high priest Caiaphas, and his coadjutor Annas, the Roman procurator Pilate, and the treacherous disciple Judas; because the suppression of their names would have impaired the evidence of their history to posterity. And even these are barely mentioned without censure and without resentment. The epithet attached to Judas by all the evangelists (*ὁ παραδους*, *who delivered him up*) is expressive of the simple fact, rather than of its criminality; which would be more aptly signified by *προδοτης*, *traitor*, as he is styled on one solitary occasion (Luke vi. 16).

The same integrity pervades whatever is recorded concerning themselves. The evangelists honestly acknowledge not

only the lowness of their station, but also the meanness of their original employments, the indigence of their circumstances, the inveteracy of their national prejudices, the slowness of their apprehension under so excellent a Teacher, the weakness of their faith, their ambitious views, and the warm contentions they agitated among themselves. They even tell us of their cowardice in deserting their Master when he was seized by his enemies, and that after his crucifixion they all resumed their secular employments—for ever resigning those hopes which they had once fondly cherished, and abandoning the cause in which they had been so long engaged, notwithstanding all the proofs that had been exhibited, and the conviction which they had before entertained that Jesus was the Messiah, and that his religion was from God. They mention, with many affecting circumstances, the incredulity of one of their associates, not convinced of the reality of their Lord's resurrection but by ocular and sensible demonstration. They might have concealed their own faults and follies from the world—or, if they had chosen to mention them, they might have alleged plausible reasons to soften and extenuate them. But they related, without disguise, events and facts just as they happened, and left them to speak their own language. In like manner, when recording the exercise of the miraculous powers with which they were endowed, they relate these astonishing facts without any ornaments of language, and in the most concise and simple manner. They do nothing, they assume nothing, in their own character. In short, they speak with such certainty, with so much self-conviction, and with such confidence, of the truth of their history, that assuredly we can no longer depend on any historian whatever, if we entertain the least doubt concerning the integrity of the writers of the New Testament. And, if we compare their merits as *historians* with that of other writers, we shall be convinced that they are inferior to none who ever wrote, either with regard to knowledge of persons, acquaintance with facts, candour of mind, or reverence for truth. *

* Bonnet, Ouvres, tom. x. pp. 498—501. 528—531, 4to edit. Dr. Hales's Analysis, vol. ii. book ii. pp. 693, *et seq.* Dr. Harwood's Introd. vol. i. pp. 6—10. Less, p. 330. The above considerations on the evangelists are founded on the internal evidence drawn from their writings. The *external* testimonies to their integrity are the confirmations of their statements in most material points by Jewish and Heathen contemporary historians. Many of these testimonies are incidentally introduced in the first volume of this work. Dr. Lardner's 'Credibility of the Gospel History' (Works, vol. i. 8vo and 4to) contains a noble tribute to the integrity and veracity of the sacred writers. His

6. *They relate the transactions of their own times.* So many facts and circumstances indeed are recorded, that if the narrative were not true, they might have been easily confuted. The scenes of the most material events are not laid in remote, obscure, or unfrequented places; the time fixed is not some distant age; nor is the account given obscure and general. The facts are related as of recent occurrence, some of them as having taken place at Jerusalem, then subject to the Roman government, and garrisoned by a band of Roman soldiers; others as having happened at Cæsarea; others in cities of great resort in Syria, and elsewhere. The Gospels are a history of no obscure person. Jesus Christ was a subject of universal curiosity: he preached and wrought miracles in the presence of thousands, and was frequently attended by great numbers of persons of all ranks and characters. When the high priest interrogated him concerning his disciples and doctrine, he answered, “I spake *openly to the world*; I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither the Jews *always resort*, and in secret have I said nothing” (John xviii. 20); and he appealed to those who had heard him for the publicity of his conduct. Both Jews and Gentiles severely scrutinized his character and conduct; and he was ultimately put to death publicly and during a solemn festival, when the Jews were assembled at Jerusalem. While the principal facts, related in the Gospels, were fresh in the memory of their countrymen, the four evangelists published their several memoirs of the life and death of Jesus Christ. In relating his miraculous operations, they mention the time, the place, the persons concerned, and the names of those whom he healed or raised from the dead. They delivered their histories to the people among whom he had lived, while that generation was alive who beheld the scenes which they had described. Now the enemies of Christ and his disciples were sufficiently able and willing to detect falsehoods, if there had been any, in these publications: their credit was at stake, and, for their own vindication, it was incumbent on those who put him to death, and persecuted his disciples, to contradict their testimony, if any part of it had been false. But this was never attempted, and consequently the circumstantiality of the evangelical historians establishes their credibility. The same remark is applicable to the Acts of

work is very ably abridged by Dr. Less in pp. 300, *et seq.* of his *Treatise on the Authenticity of the New Testament*; and also by Mr. Haldane in his *Treatise on the Evidence, &c. of Revelation*, vol. ii. pp. 119—141.

the Apostles, which like the Gospels, were published in the place and among the people where they were transacted, and attested by those who opposed Christianity.—“What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them, is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem, and *we cannot deny it* (Acts iv. 16).

7. *They appealed to notorious proofs.* Whatever internal marks of credibility the evangelical writings possess (and which could not but carry conviction to those to whom they were addressed), their authors confirm the veracity of their statements by an appeal to the miracles wrought by themselves, and the extraordinary gifts conferred by them upon many other persons. This is evident from their epistles, which were written and directed to those who had beheld those miracles, and had participated in those gifts, and which also contain reproofs for the mismanagement of such gifts, and various directions respecting the better use and employment of them *. If these persons had not received such gifts, would this mode of writing and arguing have recommended the persons or doctrines of the apostles to them, who were declining from both? Would they not have contradicted the apostles as asserting deliberate falsehoods?

8. *“They suffered every thing for the truth of their narration, even death itself, and brought many of their contemporaries to a conviction of its truth.”* We have already noticed this topic incidentally; and the history of the first professors of Christianity bears witness to the afflictions, sufferings, and painful deaths to which they were constantly exposed, and which they cheerfully endured for the sake of their testimony. History also shows that by their testimony they so fully convinced a vast number of their contemporaries, who could without any trouble have proved the truth or falsehood of their statements, that even these encountered great persecutions, and cheerfully ventured estate, liberty, and life itself, on the truth of the facts they asserted. Nor were the persons who thus embraced the Christian faith (notwithstanding the sufferings which they knew that such profession would infallibly bring upon them,) merely ignorant or illiterate individuals, who might be supposed to be hurried into a belief of Christ, through a blind and thoughtless enthusiasm. Among the first professors of Christianity we have instances of many persons of quality and

* See 1 Cor. i. 4, 5. ii. 4, 5. v. 3—5. xii. xiii. 8. xiv. 1—33. 2 Cor. xii. 7—11. Gal. iii. 5. 1 Thess. i. 5.

rank, men capable of investigating truth, and judging of its evidences, some of whom were philosophers, and accurately acquainted with the best writings, and with all the learning of the Gentiles. *

9. *The credibility of the Gospels is further attested by the principal facts contained in them being confirmed by monuments, of great celebrity, which subsist in every Christian country to the present day.* For instance, BAPTISM in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the rite by which, from the beginning, men have been initiated into the profession of Christianity—perpetuates the remembrance of Christ's having taught those sublime truths, concerning the Father Almighty, the eternal Son, and the Holy Spirit the Comforter, with which the world is now enlightened, as the Gospels inform us.—The LORD'S SUPPER, which is frequently celebrated by all believers, prevents the memory of Christ's death from being lost in any age or country of the world.—The *stated observance* of the FIRST DAY of the week, in honour of Christ's resurrection from the dead, preserves that grand event from falling into oblivion. And as these monuments perpetuate the memory, so they demonstrate the truth of the facts contained in the Gospel-history: for, if Jesus Christ neither lived, nor taught, nor wrought miracles, nor died, nor rose again from the dead, it is altogether incredible that so many men, in countries so widely distant, should have conspired together to perpetuate such a series of falsehoods, by commencing the observation of the institutions of Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the Lord's Day; and it is equally incredible that, by continuing to observe them, they should have imposed those falsehoods upon posterity. †

10. Lastly, “*The wonderful establishment and propagation of Christianity is a most convincing proof of the entire credibility of the history of the New Testament, and of the religion which*

* Such were Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyprus (Acts xiii. 7—12, Dionysius, a member of the senate or council of Areopagus, and many others of the polished and inquisitive Athenians (Acts xvii. 34); Erastus, treasurer of Corinth; and even persons belonging to the imperial court (Rom. xvi. 23); Justin Martyr, once a Platonic philosopher; and Athenagoras, an Athenian philosopher, who at first entertained so unfavourable an opinion of the Christian religion that he determined to write against it, but, on inquiring into the facts that supported it, was convinced by the blaze of evidence in its favour, and turned his designed invective into an elaborate apology. (Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 180—187; 4to, vol. i. pp. 379—381). To these may be added the eminent writers whose testimonies to the authenticity of the New Testament have already been cited, pp. 348—357. of this volume.

† Macknight's Harmony, vol. i. prelim. obs. viii. and his Credibility of the Gospel History, pp. 555—563.

it establishes." Before the second century was completed, the Christian doctrine was propagated through the whole Roman empire, which then comprized almost the whole known world. It prevailed without the assistance of any temporal power. "Destitute of all human advantages, protected by no authority, assisted by no art, not recommended by the reputation of its author, not enforced by eloquence in its advocates, the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. We behold twelve men, poor, artless, and uneducated, triumphing over the fiercest and most determined opposition, over the tyranny of the magistrate, and the subtleties of the philosopher, over the prejudices of the Gentile, and the bigotry of the Jew." In progress of time the church became divided by heretics, as well as exposed to a series of the most sanguinary persecutions; yet still the truths she professed continued to spread, in defiance of all these impediments. And notwithstanding those truths are repugnant to every bad passion of the human heart, and require, from those who profess them, the most exalted piety, as well as the strictest possible regard to every civil, moral, and relative duty, as well as the purest and most diffusive benevolence—still Christianity has continued to spread (as its founder had predicted) in every part of the known world, and at the present day is embraced and confessed by a tenth part of the human race. *

II. Hence it is evident that the writers of the New Testament were men of the utmost integrity, and faithful historians, whose relations are entitled to the fullest and most implicit credibility. But since an honest man may possibly mistake—not indeed in facts which he affirms to be true upon his own knowledge, but in inferences from those facts, in precepts and doctrines, or in delivering the sentiments of others—if we can urge no more in behalf of the writers of the New Testament, their authority will be only human. Something further seems to be requisite, besides a pious life and a mind purified from passion and prejudice, to qualify them to be the first teachers of a new revelation—namely, a divine assistance, which we call **INSPIRATION**.

The precise nature and extent of this inspiration, indeed, are topics that have been warmly agitated; some contending that the apostles and evangelists were inspired only in those places where they profess to deliver the very words of God;

* The arguments here briefly noticed have been illustrated at considerable length by various writers; but no one has treated them more ably than Dr. Less in the treatise already referred to, pp. 330—396.

while in the historical and other passages they ascribe to them no more authority than is due to the writings of well-informed and upright men. It is, however, by no means easy to determine these questions; but this much we may venture to affirm, viz.—That God bestowed upon the apostles such a degree of divine influence, assistance, or guidance, as enabled them to communicate the knowledge of his will to others, without any shadow of uncertainty, mistake, or error, whether the subjects of such communications were then first revealed to those who declared them, or were things with which they were before acquainted.

For, in the first place, the apostles had a promise of divine assistance upon certain occasions. “*When they deliver you up,*” says Christ, “*take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you*” (Mark xiii. 11. Luke xxi. 14, 15). Whence we may reason thus: if the apostles were to receive from the Holy Spirit a skill to speak what was proper when they appeared in public to defend Christianity, we may suppose that they were guided by the same Spirit in their writings; because this was of greater importance, and more worthy of the divine interposition. By speaking justly they might confute some adversaries, preserve themselves and their religion from the contempt of their hearers, and convert and confirm that part of the assembly which had good dispositions; but their writings were designed for the service, not of four or five hundred men, but of all ages and nations.

SECONDLY, Our Saviour promised his apostles that the Holy Spirit should continually abide with them, that he should lead them into all truth, and that in particular he should bring to their remembrance whatsoever Christ had said unto them; which will appear to have been necessary, if we consider that the Gospels consist in a great measure of the discourses of Christ—that Christ conversed with them at least for three years—that they had at that time very imperfect notions of the religion which he came to teach, and of the office to which they should be appointed—and that in all probability they had not * collected materials for the Gospels, or set down his discourses, whilst he was with them.

THIRDLY, Our Lord told his disciples that they were not then disposed to receive and understand some truths which the

* When Christ, after his resurrection, sent forth his apostles, he gave them no command to write.

Holy Spirit should afterwards reveal to them; and the apostles have taught us some things which are not to be found in the Gospels, or are not clearly delivered there, as the design and the abolition of the ceremonial law, certain relative duties, and some particulars concerning the worship of God and the regulation of Christian societies or churches. It is therefore a vain distinction which some have attempted to make between the precepts or doctrines of Christ and those of the apostles, as if less regard were to be paid to the latter than to the former. Our Saviour seems plainly to make the apostles equal with himself, as teachers, commands all men to receive them, to hear them, and to pay the same deference to them as to him.

LASTLY, The apostles* upon several occasions affirm that they had an extraordinary guidance of the Holy Spirit; they declare that they had received their doctrines, not from men, but from Jesus Christ, and that every one who pretended to inspiration must acknowledge this, or ought to pass for an impostor, if he owned it not. They say that they had the mind of Christ; they call their doctrine the word of God and of Christ, the commandment of God and of the Lord, the wisdom of God, the wisdom which God had revealed to them by his Spirit, and words which the Holy Spirit had taught them, the testimony of God, the Gospel of God by which men should be judged: they assert that they are of God, that he who knoweth God heareth them, and that he who heareth them not is not of God. †

But, besides these declarations of the apostles and evangelists, we have several additional considerations, all of which concur to prove that they wrote under divine inspiration. Many of the arguments which have already been adduced in proof of their authenticity and credibility, are equally applicable to demonstrate the reality of their inspiration. Not to enter into any unnecessary repetitions, we may briefly remark,

1. That if the evangelists and apostles had not been thus plenarily inspired, they could not have assumed to themselves the authority of Christ in publishing his doctrine with effect; nor could they have given evidence that they were invested with such authority by their power of working miracles: for if the miracles recorded in the New Testament had not actually been performed, these writers would have appealed to facts which

* Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor. ii. 7. 10. 12, 13. xiv. 37. Ephes. iii. 3. 5. 1 Thess. ii. 13. iv. 15. 1 John iv. 6, &c. See Whitby, Gen. Pref. vol. i.

† Jortin's Discourses concerning the Christian Religion, pp. 252—255.

their contemporaries could have proved to be falsehoods, and consequently their doctrine must have fallen to the ground.

2. Another argument in confirmation of the inspiration of the New Testament is the system of doctrine which it exhibits, and the holiness of its precepts: and on examination it will appear that this system is so excellent, and these precepts are so perfectly holy, that the persons who published them to the world must have derived them from a purer and more exalted source, than either their own meditations, or the writings of other men.

The account of God and his perfections commends itself to our reason as worthy of the highest and most excellent of all beings. He is represented as a pure Spirit, possessed of wisdom, holiness, justice, and goodness; eternal, almighty and unchangeable; the creator and governor of the world; the witness and judge of our actions. At the same time his majesty is softened (if we may be allowed the expression) by his benevolence, which is liberal and unwearied in diffusing good throughout the universe; “his tender mercies are over all his works,” embracing at once the interests of our souls and our bodies; and while he bestows in abundance the blessings and consolations of the present life, he has provided for us perfect and exalted felicity in the life to come. “Of all the views of God which had ever been given, none was so calculated to endear him to us, and to inspire our hearts with confidence, as this short but interesting description, of which the scheme of redemption affords a sublime illustration—“GOD IS LOVE!” What men had, in all ages, wished for in vain—an atonement for sin, (which conscience and their natural notions of divine justice taught them to be necessary)—the sacred books point out in the death of Jesus, which, in consequence of the dignity of his person, our reason perceives to have been of sufficient value to expiate the guilt of innumerable millions. In favour of the immortality of the soul, a point so important, but which to the wisest of the Gentiles seemed so doubtful, they speak in the most decisive language, and hold out to the hopes and fears of mankind rewards and punishments suited to their nature, and which it is worthy of God to dispense. The system of morality contained in them is pure and rational, alike remote from the overstrained precepts of superstition and enthusiasm, and the loose, compliant maxims of worldly policy. It comprehends all the duties which we owe to God and to man; it is calculated for every rank and order of society, and speaks with equal strictness and authority to the rich and honourable,

and to the poor and ignoble; and its happy effects, were it generally practised, would be to change the face of the world, and make it resemble heaven*." In fact, wherever the Christian faith has been sincerely embraced, effects the most beneficial have invariably flowed from its reception. Polytheism and idolatry have been banished; a milder administration of civil government, and the blessings of toleration, have invariably been introduced; the miseries of war have been alleviated, and the manners and dispositions of men have been both softened and civilized. But it is in the private walks of life especially that the efficacy of the Christian system has been practically felt, in reclaiming the profane and immoral to sobriety, equity, truth, and piety, and to an exemplary behaviour in relative life. Having been "made free from sin, and become the servants of God, they have their fruit unto holiness;" and, after "patiently continuing in well-doing," and cheerfully bearing various afflictions, they joyfully meet death, being supported by the hope of "eternal life, as the gift of God through Jesus Christ;" while they who are best acquainted with the Gospel, are most convinced that they have been rendered wiser, more holy, as well as more happy, by believing it; and that there is a reality in religion, though various interests and passions may hinder them from duly embracing it. "There are indeed enthusiasts also, but they become such by forsaking the *old rule* of FAITH and duty for some *new fancy*: and there are hypocrites, but they attest the reality and excellency of religion, by deeming it worth their while to counterfeit it." †

3. The divine origin of the New Testament may be further inferred from the agreement subsisting between the various parts of its doctrines; since, unless we admit that they were divinely inspired, it is not easy to explain how men so unacquainted with polite literature as the evangelists and apostles were (at least with the exception of Saint Paul), and who wrote at different and distant times and places, should so uniformly coincide in their principal doctrines and precepts. *Apparent* inconsistencies (we have already shown) do exist, and these will perplex superficial readers; but they will vanish upon accurate investigation. Nor could any charge of disagreement among the writers of the New Testament be ever substantiated, for it can only be said that they related the same facts with different circumstances, which are perfectly reconcileable; and that they gave instructions suited to the persons whom they addressed, without

* Dick on the Inspiration of Scripture, p. 130.

† Scott's Essays, p. 20.

systematically showing the harmony of them with other parts of divine truth. They wrote not by concert, and bestowed no pains to avoid the appearance of inconsistency; yet the exact coincidence, which is perceptible among them by the attentive reader, is truly astonishing, and cannot be accounted for on any rational principle, without admitting that they wrote "*as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*"

4. Lastly, the inspiration of the New Testament may be inferred from the *prophecies* it contains. We have already had occasion to glance at the subject of prophecy * in general. It may therefore suffice to observe, that the predictions contained in the New Testament afford most decisive evidence that its writers were under divine influence, assistance, or guidance; for they were not delivered in obscure and ambiguous terms, like the antient Heathen oracles, which were capable of any interpretation, and were to be explained by the event; but they were delivered in clear and explicit terms, and all things were strictly accomplished. To omit our Saviour's predictions of his own death and resurrection;—he foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and the very generation that heard the prediction lived to be the miserable witnesses of its fulfilment. He foretold that he should have a church and people, not only in express declarations, but also by monuments erected in his church, which (as we have already seen) subsist to the present day. He commanded his immediate apostles to go and teach all nations, and accordingly they went forth, and carried his Gospel to most parts of the civilized world. After their death, it was propagated still further, so that the Heathens have been given for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession. What makes this monument of the truth of our Lord's history very remarkable, is, that the world was thus converted in an age that was justly celebrated for the height to which literature and the polite arts were carried by the Greeks and Romans, the renowned masters of the sciences: nay, what is still more remarkable, almost the very first triumphs of the Christian religion were in the heart of Greece itself; for churches were soon planted at Corinth, Athens, Berea, Thessalonica, and at Philippi, as is evident from Saint Paul's epistles directed to the churches in these cities. Even Rome herself, the mistress of the world, was not able to resist the force of truth, many of her inhabitants embracing the Gospel. Nor were the lower class the only persons in those cities who

* See p. 216 and 225 of this volume.

first became Christians: among the early converts we find men of character, rank, learning, and judgment, whose offices and stations rendered them conspicuous *. And in process of time vast multitudes of every rank and class, and in every country, though they could have no temptations to forsake the various religions in which they had been educated, voluntarily embraced Christianity, and worshipped Jesus Christ as God, constrained by the irresistible evidences of the truth of the Gospel. But, although the conversion of the world was sudden, it was not on that account unstable, or of short continuance: for the Christian religion has remained to this day, in full vigour, during the lapse of eighteen centuries (notwithstanding its adversaries have every where strenuously attacked it both with arguments and arms); and it is even now extending itself in various directions through uncivilized and heathen lands in defiance of all opposition. †

The same prophetic spirit which animated Jesus Christ, was also imparted to his apostles, who foretold, in terms the most explicit, the long apostasy and general corruption of the professors of Christianity. These predictions, all the world may see, have been abundantly fulfilled in the church of Rome. Now, the spirit of God alone could foresee such a distant and deplorable state of things, which no human probability could have conjectured would have arisen out of the pure and heavenly doctrine of Christ. But the spirit, which predicted this event, is the very same that was poured out upon the apostles, and enlightened their minds with the knowledge of the Gospel: therefore the apostles who wrote the New Testament had the spirit of God, by whom they were inspired. ‡

* See p. 376, *supra*, note *.

† Macknight's Harmony, vol. i. prel. obs. viii. and his Credibility, pp. 489—555.

‡ Moore's Treatise on the Plenary Inspiration of the New Testament, (8vo, 1793) *passim*. Dick's Essay on the Inspiration of the Scriptures, pp. 21—50. Parry's Inquiry into the Nature and Extent of the Inspiration of the Apostles and other Writers of the New Testament (8vo, 1797). The inspiration of the New Testament is also amply discussed by Bishop Warburton, in his Doctrine of Grace, book i. ch. v. (Works, vol. viii. pp. 266—272, 8vo); by Dr. Doddridge, in a Dissertation in the third volume of his Expositor, appendix, no. 2; and by Michaelis, in his Introd. to the New Test. vol. i. pp. 70, *et seq.* And Professor Van Mildert has condensed much useful information on this very important topic, in his Sermons at Mr. Boyle's Lectures, vol. ii. serm. xxiii. and appendix, pp. 85, *et seq.*

SECTION III.

ON THE CLASSIFICATION AND DIVISIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- I. *Antient and modern modes of arranging the books of the New Testament*;—II. *Titles to each book*;—III. *Subscriptions to the different books*;—IV. *Antient divisions of Τίτλοι and Κεφάλαια*;—*Modern division of chapters*;—V. *Antient stichoi and modern verses*;—VI. *Account of the antient and modern punctuation of the New Testament, with illustrative specimens.*

1. VARIOUS modes of arranging the books of the New Testament have obtained at different times; nor does the order in which they are to be found in manuscripts correspond with that, in which they occur in the printed copies and modern translations. In the time of Ignatius (who flourished A. D. 107), the New Testament consisted of two codes or collections, called ‘Gospels’ and ‘Epistles’, or ‘Gospels’ and ‘Apostles’* : the same division prevailed in the time of Tertullian, A. D. 200, (the Acts being included in the latter division), who called the Gospels “our Digesta,” in allusion, as it seems, to some collection of the Roman laws digested into order†. This division also obtained in the time of Cyprian, who flourished soon after Tertullian‡. About a century afterwards, Athanasius, or the author of the Synopsis of the sacred Scriptures attributed to him, makes the New Testament to consist of eight volumes or parts, viz. the four Gospels; the *fifth* book is the Acts of the Apostles; the *sixth* contains the seven catholic Epistles; the *seventh*, the fourteen Epistles of Saint Paul; and the *eighth*, the Revelation of Saint John. In a later age, Leontius of Byzantium§ (or Constantinople) distributed the books of the New Testament into six books or parts, the *first* of which comprized the Gospels of Matthew and Mark; the *second*, those of Luke and John; the *third*, the Acts of the Apostles; the *fourth*, the seven Catholic Epistles; the *fifth*, the Epistles of Saint Paul; and the *sixth*, the Apocalypse.

* See the passages in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 81, 82; 4to, vol. i. pp. 322, 323.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 278—282; 4to, vol. i. pp. 431—433.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. iii. pp. 179, 180; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 28, 29.

§ De Sectis, art. 2. cited by Heidegger, Manuale Biblicum, p. 441, and Rumpæus, Comm. Crit. ad Libros N. T. p. 97.

But the more modern, and certainly more convenient arrangement, is that of the *Historical*, *Doctrinal*, and *Prophetical* Books.

The *Historical Books* are such as contain principally matters of fact, though points of faith and doctrine are also interwoven. They consist of two parts; the *first*, comprizing the four Gospels, relates the transactions of Jesus Christ. These, when formed into a volume, have sometimes been collectively termed *Εὐαγγέλιον*, *the Gospel*, and *Εὐαγγέλιων Γραφή*, *the Scripture of the Gospels*. The *second* part of these historical books relates the transactions of the Apostles, especially those of Peter and Paul, and comprizes the book called the Acts of the Apostles. The *Doctrinal Books* include the fourteen Epistles of Saint Paul, and also the seven Catholic Epistles, so called because they were chiefly addressed to the converted Jews, who were dispersed throughout the Roman empire. The appellation of *Catholic Epistles* is of considerable antiquity, being mentioned by Eusebius, Jerome, and the Pseudo-Athanasius *. The Revelation of Saint John forms the *prophetical* class of the books of the New Testament.

On the preceding classification we may remark, that the appellation of historical books is given to the Gospels and Acts, because their subject-matter is principally historical; and that the Gospels are placed *first*, on account of the importance of their contents, which relate the history of the life, discourses, doctrines, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, which form the primary articles of the Christian faith. The Acts of the Apostles are placed *second* in order, because they continue and confirm the history delivered in the Gospels, and give an account of the churches which were planted by the Apostles. The Epistles hold the *third* place, because they contain instructions to the newly planted churches, and more fully explain, confirm, and apply the doctrines of the Gospel. In the *fourth* place comes the Apocalypse, which, Dr. Mill remarks†, is fitly placed last, because it predicts things that are hereafter to be fulfilled, and is therefore of a different kind from the rest; and also because it has, towards the end, that remarkable clause (Rev. xxii. 18, 19.) against adding to or taking from it, which may be applied to all the books of Scripture: to which observation we may add, that there are strong rea-

* Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 23. Hieronymi, Cat. Script. Eccles. (Opp. tom. i. pp. 169, 170. (Francof. 1684). Pseudo-Athanasii Synops. Sac. Script. in Athanasii Opp. p. 59.

† Millii Prolegom. ad Nov. Test. § 239.

sons for believing it to be the last written of all the books of the New Testament. *

With respect to the order in which particular books (especially Saint Paul's Epistles) are to be placed under these respective classes, there is a considerable difference of opinion among learned men, in consequence of the diversity of the dates when the books are supposed to have been written. As these dates are particularly considered in the account of each book, given in the following pages, it may suffice at present to remark that the order, now generally received, is the most antient, being that adopted by Eusebius in the early part of the fourth century, as it had probably been the order adopted by Ignatius, who lived at the close of the first and during the former half of the second century. Dr. Lardner (in whose judgment Bishop Tomline † has acquiesced) is of opinion that the received order is the best; and although it is both entertaining and useful to know the order in which Saint Paul's Epistles were written, yet he is of opinion that we should not deviate from that arrangement which has been so long established in all the editions of the original Greek, as well as in all modern versions, partly on account of the difficulty which would attend such an alteration, and also because the order of time has not yet been settled. ‡

The following table will perhaps be useful to the student, as exhibiting at one view the various classes of the books of the New Testament above enumerated.

* Rumpæi, *Comm. Crit. Nov. Test.* pp. 98—120. Moldenhawer, *Introd. ad Lib. Bibl.* pp. 204—206. Heidegger, *Manuale Biblicum*, pp. 441—447.

† *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. i. p. 276.

‡ Dr. Lardner's *Works*, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 641—649; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 454—458.

The Books of the NEW TESTAMENT are,

I. HISTORICAL, describing the history of	1. <i>Jesus Christ</i> , the Head of the Church; whose genealogy, birth, life, doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension are recorded by the four evangelists	Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.
2. <i>The Christian Church</i> , whose primitive plantation, state, and increase, both among Jews and Gentiles, are declared in the		Acts of the Apostles.
II. DOCTRINAL, comprizing all the Epistles written by the Apostles, either,	1. <i>General</i> , which Paul wrote unto whole Churches about matters of general and public concernment, as the Epistles to the	Romans. I. Corinthians. II. Corinthians. Galatians. Ephesians. Philippians. Colossians. I. Thessalonians. II. Thessalonians.
2. To the believing Jews, as it is probable all these Epistles were, viz.	2. <i>Particular</i> , to particular persons concerning,	I. Timothy. II. Timothy. Titus.
1. The Epistle, written by Paul, to the	James	Philemon.
2. The Seven Epistles, commonly called	Peter	Hebrews. James.
General, or the Catholic Epistles, of	John	{ I. Peter. II. Peter
Jude	Jude	{ I. John. II. John. III. John.
III. PROPHEITICAL, foretelling what shall be the future state and condition of the Church of Christ to the end of the world, viz. written by John the Apostle, viz.		Jude. The Revelations.

II. It is not known by whom the *Inscriptions* or *TITLES* of the various books of the New Testament, were prefixed. In consequence of the very great diversity of titles occurring in manuscripts, it is generally admitted that they were not originally written by the apostles, but were subsequently added, in order to distinguish one book from another, when the canon of the New Testament was formed. It is however certain, that these titles are of very great antiquity; for we find them mentioned by Tertullian in the latter part of the second century *, and Justin Martyr, in the early part of the same century, expressly states, that the writings of the four evangelists were in his day termed *Gospels*. †

III. But the *Subscriptions* annexed to the Epistles are manifestly spurious: for, in the first place, some of them are beyond all doubt false, as those of the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, which purport to be written at Athens, whereas they were written from Corinth. Secondly, they are altogether wanting in some antient manuscripts of the best note, while in others they are greatly varied. And, thirdly, the subscription annexed to the first Epistle to Timothy is evidently the production of a writer of the age of Constantine the Great, and could not have been written by the apostle Paul: for it states that Epistle to have been written to Timothy from Laodicea, the chief city of Phrygia Pacatiana; whereas the country of Phrygia was not divided into the two provinces of *Phrygia Prima*, or Pacatiana, and *Phrygia Secunda*, until the fourth century. According to Dr. Mill, the subscriptions were added by Euthalius Bishop of Sulca in Egypt, who published an edition of the Acts, Epistles of Saint Paul, and of the Catholic Epistles, about the middle of the fifth century. But, whoever was the author of the subscriptions, it is evident that he was either grossly ignorant, or grossly inattentive. ‡

IV. It is evident, on inspecting the most antient manuscripts of the New Testament, that the several books were originally written in one continued series; but in progress of time, when Christianity was established, and frequent appeals were made to the sacred writers in consequence of the heresies that disturbed the peace of the church, it became necessary to contrive some mode by which to facilitate references to their productions.

* *Adversus Marcionem*, lib. iv. c. 2.

† *Apol. i. p. 98.* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 121; 4to, vol. i. p. 344.

‡ On this subject Dr. Paley has some useful observations in his *Horæ Paulinæ*, pp. 378, *et seq.*

The Jews, we have already seen*, divided their law into *parasches* and *siderim*, or larger and smaller sections, and the prophets into *haphtoras* or sections; and it has been conjectured that this division suggested to the early Christians the idea of dividing the books of the New Testament into similar sections; but by whom such division was first made, is a question that is by no means easy to determine. Some vestiges of it are supposed to be found in Justin Martyr's second apology for the Christians†, and in the writings of Tertullian‡. But Dr. Lardner is of opinion, that these passages scarcely amount to a full proof that any sections or chapters were marked in the copies of the New Testament so early as the second century. It is however certain that the antients divided the New Testament into two kinds of chapters, some longer and others shorter; the former were called in Greek *τίτλοι*, and in Latin *breves*; and the table of contents of each *brevis*, which was prefixed to the copies of the New Testament, was called *breviarium*. The shorter chapters were called *κεφαλαια*, *capitula*, and the list of them *capitulatio*.

This method of dividing is of very great antiquity, certainly prior to the fourth century: for Jerome, who flourished towards the close of that century, expunged a passage from Saint Matthew's Gospel, which forms an entire chapter, as being an interpolation§. These divisions were formerly very numerous; but, not being established by any ecclesiastical authority, none of them were ever received by the whole church. Saint Matthew's Gospel, for instance, according to the old *breviaria*, contained twenty-eight *breves*; but, according to Jerome, sixty-eight. The same author divides his Gospel into 355 *capitula*; others, into 74; others, into 88; others, into 117; the Syriac version, into 76; and Erpenius's edition of the Arabic, into 101. The most antient, and it appears the most approved of these divisions, was that of Tatian (A. D. 172) in his Harmony of the Four Gospels, for the *τίτλοι* or *breves*: and that of Ammonius, a learned Christian of Alexandria in the third century, in his Harmony of the Gospels,

* See pp. 10, 11, *supra*, of this volume.

† § 87. Ernesti seems to countenance this hypothesis. *Inst. Interp. Nov. Test.* p. 156.

‡ *Ad Ux. lib. ii. c. 2. p. 187. D. De Pudicitia, cap. 6. sub finem. De Monogam. c. 11. p. 683.* The passages are given at length by Dr. Lardner, *Works*, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 283; 4to, vol. i. p. 433.

§ The paragraph in question is to be found in the Codex Bezae, immediately after the twenty-eighth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter of Saint Matthew's Gospel. Michaelis has printed it, together with two Latin translations of it, in his *Introduction to the New Test.* vol. i. pp. 293—295.

for the κεφαλαια or capitula. From him they were termed the *Ammonian Sections*. As these divisions were subsequently adopted, and the use of them was recommended, by Eusebius the celebrated ecclesiastical historian, they are frequently called by his name. According to this division, Saint Matthew contains 68 breves, and 355 capitula; Saint Mark, 48 breves, and 234 capitula; Saint Luke, 83 breves, and 342 capitula; and Saint John, 18 breves, and 231 capitula. All the evangelists together form 216 breves, and 1126 capitula. In antient Greek manuscripts the τιτλοι, or larger portions are written on the upper or lower margin, and the κεφαλαια or smaller portions are numbered on the side of the margin. They are clearly represented in Erasmus's editions of the Greek Testament, and in Robert Stephens's edition of 1550.

The division of the Acts of the Apostles, and of the Catholic Epistles, into chapters, was made by Euthalius Bishop of Sulca in Egypt, in the fifth century; who published an edition of Saint Paul's Epistles, that had been divided into chapters, in one continued series, by some unknown person in the fourth century, who had considered them as *one* book. This arrangement of the Pauline Epistles is to be found in the Vatican manuscript, and in some others; but it by no means prevails uniformly, for there are many manuscripts extant, in which a fresh enumeration commences with each Epistle.

Besides the divisions into chapters and sections above mentioned, the Codex Bezae, and other manuscripts, are further divided into lessons, called Αναγνωσματα or Αναγνωσεις. Euthalius is said to have divided Saint Paul's Epistles in this manner, as Andrew Bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia divided the Apocalypse, at the beginning of the sixth century, into twenty-four lessons, which he termed λογoi (according to the number of elders before the throne of God, Rev. iv. 4), and seventy-two titles, according to the number of parts, viz. body, soul, and spirit, of which the elders were composed!

The division of τιτλοι and κεφαλαια continued to be general both in the Eastern and Western churches, until Cardinal Hugo de Sancto Caro in the thirteenth century introduced the chapters now in use, throughout the Western church, for the New Testament as well as the Old; of which an account has already been given*. The Greek or Eastern church, however, continued to follow the antient divisions; nor are any Greek manuscripts known to be extant, in which chapters are found prior to the fifteenth century, when the Greek fugitives, after the taking

* See pp. 11, 12. of this volume.

of Constantinople, fled into the west of Europe, became transcribers for members of the Latin church, and of course adopted the Latin divisions.

V. The antients had two kinds of verses, one of which they called *στιχοι* and the other *ἐνματα*. The *stichoi* were lines that contained a certain number of letters, and therefore often broke off in the middle of a word. They served to measure the size of books; thus, Josephus's twenty books of Jewish Antiquities contained 60,000 *stichoi*, though in Ittigius's edition there are only 40,000 broken lines. The *remata* were lines measured by the sense; and, according to an antient written list preserved by Simon, and transcribed by Michaelis, the New Testament contained 18,612 *remata* *. Of the *stichoi* above mentioned, the fac-simile of the Codex Bezae, in a subsequent page, will give the reader an idea.

The verses, into which the New Testament is now divided, are much more modern, and are an imitation of those invented for the Old Testament by Rabbi Nathan in the fifteenth century †. Robert Stephens was their first inventor ‡, and introduced them in his edition of the New Testament, published in the year 1551. This invention of the learned printer was soon introduced into all the editions of the New Testament; and the very great advantage it affords, for facilitating references to particular passages, have caused it to be retained in the majority of editions and versions of the New Testament, though much to the injury of its interpretation, as many passages are now severed that ought to be united, and *vice versâ* §. From this arrangement, however, Wetstein, Bengel, Bowyer, Griesbach, and other editors of the Greek Testament, have wisely departed, and have printed the text in continued paragraphs, throwing the number of Stephens's verses into the margin. Mr. Reeves also has pursued the same method in his beautiful and correct editions of the authorized English version, and of the Greek Testament in 12mo, 1803. ||

* Introd. to the New Test. vol. ii. pp. 526, 527.

† See p. 12, *supra*, of this volume.

‡ He made this division when on a journey from Lyons to Paris, and, as his son Henry tells us (in his preface to the Concordance of the New Testament), he made it *inter equitandum*, literally, while riding on horseback; but Michaelis rather thinks that the phrase means only, that when he was weary of riding, he amused himself with this work at his inn. Michaelis, vol. ii. p. 527.

§ Thus Col. iv. 1. ought to have been united to the third chapter.

|| The title of the last-mentioned work is—"Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ, *The New Testament in Greek, according to the Text of Mill and Stephens, and the Arrangement of Mr. Reeves's Bible.*" The book is printed with singular neatness and accuracy, and the fine paper copies are truly beautiful.

VI. Whether any points for marking the sense were used by the apostles, is a question that has been greatly agitated; Pritius, Pfaff, Leusden, and many other eminent critics, maintaining that they were in use *before* the time of the apostles, while Dr. Grabe, Fabricius, Montfaucon, Hoffmann, John Henry Michaelis, Rogall, John David Michaelis, Moldenhawer, Ernesti, and a host of other critics, maintain that the use of points is *posterior* to the time of the apostles.* The *majority* of the points or stops now in use are unquestionably of modern date: for, although full points are to be found in the Codex Alexandrinus, the Codex Vaticanus, and the Codex Bezae, (as they also are in inscriptions four hundred years before the Christian æra) yet it cannot be shown that our present system of punctuation was *generally* adopted earlier than the ninth century. In fact, it seems to have been a gradual improvement, commenced by Jerome, and continued by succeeding biblical critics. The punctuation of the manuscripts of the Septuagint, Ernesti observes from Cyril of Jerusalem†, was unknown in the early part of the fourth century, and consequently (he infers) the punctuation of the New Testament was also unknown. About fifty years afterwards, Jerome began to add the comma and colon; and they were then inserted in many more antient manuscripts. About the middle of the fifth century, Euthalius published an edition of the Acts of the Apostles and of all the apostolical Epistles, dividing the New Testament into *στιχοι* (*stichoi*) or lines. This division, as we have already remarked, was regulated by the sense, so that each line terminated where some pause was to be made in speaking. When a copyist was disposed to contract his space, and therefore crowded the lines into each other, he placed a point where Euthalius had terminated the line. The Codex Bezae is the only manuscript in this country that is written in these *stichoi* or lines: a fac-simile of it is given in a subsequent page‡. In the eighth century the stroke which we call a comma was invented. In the Latin manuscript, Jerome's points were introduced by Paul Warnefrid, and Alcuin, at the command of the emperor Charlemagne; and in the ninth century the Greek note of interrogation (;) was first used. At the invention of printing, the editors placed the points arbitrarily, probably (Michaelis

* Rumpæus has given twelve closely printed quarto pages to the enumeration of these opinions. Comm. Crit. in Nov. Test. pp. 165—176.

† Cyrilli Catechesis xiii. p. 301. Ernesti, Inst. Interp. Nov. Test. p. 159.

‡ See the Appendix, No. IV. Section II. *infra*.

remarks) without bestowing the necessary attention; and Stephens in particular varied his points in every edition.*

The correct punctuation of the New Testament is of the utmost importance, many obscurities having been occasioned by an improper position of the stops. Michaelis has pointed out several instances; but as they are chiefly taken from Mr. Bowyer's *Critical Conjectures of the New Testament*, and as the passages which are mispointed are noticed by most commentators, we shall conclude this section by offering to the English reader two passages from our English version, printed line for line, so as to exhibit the mode of pointing adopted in the Codex Alexandrinus, and in the Codex Bezae, two of the most antient manuscripts of the New Testament in this country.

The following extract comprizes the first fourteen verses of Saint John's Gospel, rendered rather more literally than the idiom of our language will admit, in order to convey an exact idea

* The preceding account of the divisions of the New Testament has been drawn up from the labours of Michaelis (Introd. vol. ii. pp. 510—528. 889—910), Moldenhawer (Introd. ad Vet. et Nov. Test. pp. 200—202), Heidegger (Manuale Biblicum, pp. 432—438), Leusden (Philol. Græcus, pp. 17—22), Ernesti (Inst. Interp. Nov. Test. pp. 155—161), Rumpæus (Comm. Crit. ad Nov. Test. Libros, pp. 130—176), and of Pritius, in his *Introductio in Lectionem Novi Testamenti* (edit. Lipsiæ, 1764) cap. xxiv—xxviii. pp. 332—378. In pp. 347—362, Pritius has given the *κεφαλαια* and *τιτλοι* of Eusebius, which are also printed in Mill's edition of the Greek Testament. The Prolegomena of Mill and Wetstein, prefixed to their critical editions of the New Testament, likewise contain much curious information respecting its divisions and punctuation; and many good observations on this subject occur in Blackwall's 'Sacred Classics illustrated.' See particularly vol. ii. p. 100, *et seq.*

idea of the Alexandrian manuscript, now preserved in the British Museum. *

John, I. 1—14.

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD AND THE WORD WAS
WITH GOD. AND GOD WAS THE WORD.
HE WAS IN THE BEGINNING WITH GOD
ALL WERE MADE BY HIM AND WITH
OUT HIM WAS MADE NOT ONE THING
THAT WAS MADE IN HIM. LIFE WAS
AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN
AND THE LIGHT IN DARKNESS SHIN
ETH AND THE DARKNESS DID NOT IT COMPRE
HEND. THERE WAS A MAN SENT
FROM GOD WHOSE NAME WAS
JOHN. THIS PERSON CAME
AS A WITNESS THAT HE MIGHT TESTI
FY CONCERNING THE LIGHT THAT ALL
MIGHT BELIEVE THROUGH HIM.

The annexed passage is printed to harmonize with the Codex Bezae, which is deposited in the University Library at Cambridge.

Matt. V. 1—3.

AND SEEING THE MULTITUDES HE WENT UP INTO A MOUNTAIN
AND WHEN HE WAS SET DOWN CAME TO HIM
HIS DISCIPLES AND OPENING HIS MOUTH
HE TAUGHT THEM SAYING
BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT[†] FOR THEIRS IS
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

The Greek corresponding with this version is given *infra*, in the Appendix, No. IV. Sect. II.

* This passage is given from Mr. Wynne's Translation of the New Testament, vol. i. p. x. xi. 1764, 8vo. The Greek, corresponding to this version, is given, *infra*, in the Appendix, No. IV. Section II.

† Contracted for spirit. The Greek is ΠΙΝΙ for ΠΙΝΕΤΜΑΤΙ.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

SECTION I.

ON THE NAME AND NUMBER OF THE CANONICAL GOSPELS.

- I. *Observations on the general appellation of GOSPEL, as applied to the histories of Jesus Christ*;—II. *General scope of the Gospels*;—III. *Their number*;—IV. *Importance of the Gospels*.

I. THE word ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ, which we translate Gospel, among Greek profane writers*, signifies any good tidings (from εὖ good, and ἀγγελία, a message or tidings), and corresponds exactly with our English word Gospel, which is derived from the Saxon words ȝod, *God* or *good*, and ȝpel, *word* or *tidings*, and denotes God's word or good tidings. In the New Testament this term is confined to the glad tidings of the actual coming of the Messiah, and is even opposed to the prophecies concerning Christ (Rom. i. 1, 2). Thus, in Matt. xi. 5, our Lord says, "the poor have the Gospel preached to them"—that is, the advent and doctrines of the Messiah or Christ are preached to the poor. Hence ecclesiastical writers gave the appellation of Gospels to the lives of Christ—that is, to those sacred histories in which are recorded the "good tidings of great joy to all people," of the advent of the Messiah, together with all its joyful circumstances; and hence the authors of those histories have acquired the title of EVANGELISTS†. Besides this general title, the sacred writers use the term Gospel, with a variety of epithets, which it may be necessary to mention.

Thus, it is called the *Gospel of Peace* (Eph. vi. 15), because it proclaims peace with God to fallen man, through Jesus Christ;—*The Gospel of God concerning his Son* (Rom. i. 1, 3), because it relates every thing concerning the conception, birth, preaching, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ;—*The Gospel of his Son* (Rom. i. 9); *The Gospel of Salvation* (Eph. i. 13), because it offers salvation to the lost or miserable;—*The Gospel of the Kingdom of*

* On the various meanings of the εὐαγγέλιον, Schleusner's and Parkhurst's Greek Lexicons, or Leusden's Philologus Græcus (pp. 133—135), may be advantageously consulted.

† Rosenmüller, Scholia in N. T. tom. i. pp. 2, 3. Michaelis, vol. iii. pp. 1, 2.

God (Matt. iv. 23, ix. 35, xxiv. 14, Mark i. 14), because it proclaims the power and dominion of the Messiah, the nature and privileges of his kingdom, its laws, and the duties of its subjects;—*The Word or Doctrine* (λογος) *of the Gospel* (Acts xv. 7);—*The Word of Reconciliation* (2 Cor. v. 19), because it makes known the manner and terms by which God is reconciled to sinners;—*The Gospel of Glory* (or the glorious Gospel) *of the blessed God* (1 Tim. i. 11), as being that dispensation which exhibits the glory of all the divine attributes in the salvation of mankind;—and *The Gospel of the Grace of God* (Acts xx. 24), because it is a declaration of God's free favour towards all men.—The blessings and privileges promised in the New Testament (1 Cor. ix. 23);—The public profession of Christian doctrine (Mark viii. 35, x. 29. 2 Tim. i. 8. Philem. ver. 13); and in Gal. i. 6. 8. 9. any new doctrines, whether true or false, are respectively called *the Gospel*.

II. The general design of the evangelists in writing the Gospels was, doubtless, to confirm the Christians of that (and every succeeding) age in their belief of the truth that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, through whom alone they can obtain eternal life (John xx. 31), and also to defend this momentous truth against the calumnies of the adversaries of the Christian faith. For, as the Jews, and those who supported the Jewish superstition, would calumniate, and endeavour to render suspected, the oral declarations of the apostles concerning the life, transactions, and resurrection of our Saviour, it would not a little tend to strengthen the faith and courage of the first Christians, if the most important events in the history of Jesus Christ were committed to writing in a narrative which should set forth his dignity and divine majesty. This task was executed by two *apostles*, Matthew and John, and two *companions* of the apostles, Mark and Luke. Of these evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke have chiefly related the actions and doctrines of Jesus in Galilee, probably on account of the false reports circulated by the Jews of Jerusalem; who, being unable to deny the memorable and notorious transactions performed there by Jesus Christ, seem to have directed all their efforts to invalidate the credibility of what he is said to have taught and done in Galilee. This is the more likely, as we know that they held the Galileans in the utmost contempt, as well as every thing which came from that country (John vii. 52). Such appears to have been the reason why these three evangelists have related the transactions of Jesus Christ in Galilee more at length; while, with the exception of his passion and resurrection, they have only touched briefly on the other circumstances of his life. On the contrary, John expatiates more largely on the actions and doc-

trines of our Saviour both at Jerusalem and in Judea, and adds a variety of particulars omitted by the others.

III. The Gospels which have been transmitted to us are four in number; and we learn from undoubted authority that four, and four only, were ever received by the Christian church as the genuine and inspired writings of the evangelists*. Many of the antient fathers have attempted to assign the reason why we have precisely this number of Gospels, and have fancied that they discovered a mysterious analogy between the four Gospels and the four winds, the four regions or corners of the earth, the four rivers of Paradise, and the four corners and four rings of the ark of the covenant! But the most celebrated analogy is that of the four animals described by Ezekiel (i. 5—10), which was first observed by Irenæus †, and after him by Jerome ‡, and which gave rise to the well-known paintings of the four Evangelists.

IV. “It is a considerable advantage that a history of such importance as that of Jesus Christ has been recorded by the pens of separate and independent writers, who, from the contradictions, whether real or apparent, which are visible in these accounts, have incontestably proved that they did not unite with a view of imposing a fabulous narrative on mankind. That Saint Matthew had never seen the Gospel of Saint Luke, nor Saint Luke the Gospel of Saint Matthew, is evident from a comparison of their writings. The Gospel of Saint Mark, which was written later, must likewise have been unknown to Saint Luke; and that Saint Mark had ever read the Gospel of Saint Luke, is at least improbable, because their Gospels so frequently differ.” § It is a generally received opinion, that Saint Mark made use of Saint Matthew’s Gospel in the composition of his own; but this, it will be shown in a subsequent page ||, is an unfounded hypothesis. The Gospel of Saint John, being written after the other three, supplies what they had omitted. Thus have we four distinct and independent writers

* Irenæus adv. Hæres, lib. iii. c. 11. expressly states that in the *second* century the *four* Gospels were received by the church. See additional testimonies to the number of the Gospels in the Index to Dr. Lardner’s Works, voce *Gospels*.

† Ibid. The first living creature, says this father, which is like a lion, signifies Christ’s efficacy, principality, and regality, viz. John;—the second, like a calf, denotes his sacerdotal order, viz. Luke;—the third, having as it were a man’s face, describes his coming in the flesh as man, viz. Matthew;—and the fourth, like a flying eagle, manifests the grace of the Spirit flying into the church, viz. Mark!!

‡ Jerome, Proëm. in Matth. The reader, who is desirous of reading more of these fanciful analogies, will find them collected by Suicer, in his *Thesaurus Ecclesiasticus*, tom. i. pp. 1222, 1223.

§ Michaelis, vol. iii. p. 4.

|| See Section III. § vii. pp. 430—432, *infra*.

of one and the same history: and, though trifling variations may seem to exist in their narratives, yet these admit of easy solutions *; and in all matters of consequence, whether doctrinal or historical, there is such a manifest agreement between them as is to be found in no other writings whatever.

“ Though we have only four original writers of the life of Jesus, the evidence of the history does not rest on the testimony of four men. Christianity had been propagated in a great part of the world before any of them had written, on the testimony of thousands and tens of thousands who had been witnesses of the great facts which they have recorded; so that the writing of these particular books is not to be considered as the *cause*, but rather the *effect*, of the belief of Christianity: nor could those books have been written and received as they were, viz. as *authentic histories*, of the subject of which all persons of that age were judges, if the facts they have recorded had not been well known to be true.” †

* See Vol. I. pp. 437, *et seq.*

† Dr. Priestley's Notes on the Bible, vol. iii. p. 7.

SECTION II.

ON THE GOSPEL BY SAINT MATTHEW.

I. *Author*;—II. *Date*;—III. *In what language written*;—IV. *Genuineness and authenticity of Saint Matthew's Gospel in general*;—V. *The authenticity of the two first chapters examined and substantiated*;—VI. *Scope of this Gospel*;—VII. *Synopsis of its contents*;—VIII. *Observations on its Style*.

1. **MATTHEW**, surnamed Levi, was the son of Alpheus, but not of that Alpheus or Cleopas who was the father of James mentioned in Matt. x. 3. He was a native of Galilee, but of what city in that country, or of what tribe of the people of Israel, we are not informed. Before his conversion to Christianity, he was a publican or tax-gatherer, under the Romans, and collected the customs of all goods exported or imported at Capernaum, a maritime town on the sea of Galilee, and also received the tribute paid by all passengers who went by water. While employed “at the receipt of custom,” Jesus called him to be a witness of his words and works, thus conferring upon him the honourable office of an apostle. From that time he continued with Jesus Christ, a familiar attendant on his per-

son, a spectator of his public and private conduct, a hearer of his discourses, a witness of his miracles, and an evidence of his resurrection. After our Saviour's ascension, Matthew continued at Jerusalem with the other Apostles, and with them, on the day of Pentecost, was endowed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. How long he remained in Judea after that event, we have no authentic accounts. Socrates, an ecclesiastical historian of the fifth century, relates, that when the apostles went abroad to preach to the Gentiles, Thomas took Parthia for his lot; Bartholomew, India; and Matthew, Ethiopia. The common opinion is that he was crowned with martyrdom at Naddabar or Naddaver, a city in that country: but this is contradicted by the account of Heracleon, a learned Valentinian of the second century; who, as cited by Clement of Alexandria *, reckons Matthew among the apostles that did not die by martyrdom: and as his statement is not contradicted by Clement, it is more likely to be true than the relation of Socrates, who did not flourish until three hundred years after Heracleon.

II. Matthew is generally allowed to have written first of all the evangelists. His Gospel is uniformly placed first in all the codes or volumes of the Gospels: and the priority is constantly given to it in all the quotations of the primitive fathers, as well as of the early heretics. Its precedence therefore is unquestionable, though the precise time when it was composed is a question that has been greatly agitated. Dr. Mill, Michaelis, and Bishop Percy, after Irenæus, assign it to the year 61; Moldenhawer, to 61 or 62; Dr. Hales, to 63; Dr. Lardner and Mr. Hewlett, to 64; Baronius, Grotius, Wetstein, and others, to 41; Dr. Cave, to 48; Dr. Owen and Bishop Tomline, to 38; and Dr. Townson, to the year 37. In this conflict of opinions, it is difficult to decide. The accounts left us by the ecclesiastical writers of antiquity, concerning the times when the Gospels were written or published, are so vague, confused, and discordant, that they lead us to no solid or certain determination. The oldest of the antient fathers collected the reports of their own times, and set them down for certain truths; and those who followed adopted their accounts with implicit reverence †.

* Stromata, lib. 4. p. 502 B. See the passage in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. p. 48; 4to, vol. iii. p. 159,

† Of all the primitive fathers, Irenæus (who flourished in the second century) is the only one who has said any thing concerning the exact time when Saint Matthew's Gospel was written; and the passage (adv. Hæres, lib. iii. c. 1.) in which he has mentioned it, is so obscure, that no positive conclusion can be drawn from it. Dr. Lardner (8vo, vol. vi. p. 49; 4to, vol. iii. p. 160) and Dr. Townson (discourse iv. on the Gospels, sect. iv. § 6) understand it in very different senses. And Eusebius, who lived in the

Thus traditions, true or false, passed on from one writer to another, without examination, until it became almost too late to examine them to any purpose. Since, then, *external* evidence affords us but little assistance, it becomes necessary to have recourse to the *internal* testimony which the Gospel of Saint Matthew affords, and we apprehend that it will be found to preponderate in favour of an early date.

In the first place, it is by no means probable that the Christians should be left any considerable number of years without a written history of our Saviour's ministry. "It is certain," Bishop Tomline remarks, "that the apostles, immediately after the descent of the Holy Ghost, which took place only ten days after the ascension of our Saviour into heaven, preached the Gospel to the Jews with great success: and surely it is reasonable to suppose that an authentic account of our Saviour's doctrines and miracles would very soon be committed to writing for the confirmation of those who believed in his divine mission, and for the conversion of others, and more particularly to enable the Jews to compare the circumstances of the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus with their antient prophecies relative to the Messiah: and we may conceive that the apostles would be desirous of losing no time in writing an account of the miracles which Jesus performed, and of the discourses which he delivered, because, the sooner such an account was published, the easier it would be to inquire into its truth and accuracy; and consequently, when these points were satisfactorily ascertained, the greater would be its weight and authority*." On these accounts the learned prelate assigns the date of Saint Matthew's Gospel to the year 38.

Secondly, as the sacred writers had a regard to the circumstances of the persons for whose use they wrote, we have an additional evidence for the early date of this Gospel, in the state of persecution in which the church was at the time when it was written: for it contains many obvious references to such a state, and many very apposite addresses both to the injuring and to the injured party†. Now the greatest persecution ever raised against the church, while it consisted only of Jewish and Samaritan converts, was that which was commenced by the

early part of the fourth century, merely says that Matthew, after preaching to the Hebrews, wrote his Gospel for their information, previously to his going to evangelize other nations (Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 24); but he does not specify the time, nor is it mentioned by any other antient writer.

* Elem. of Christ. Theol. vol. i. p. 301.

† See this proved at length in Dr. Owen's Observations on the Four Gospels, pp. 1. 21. 8vo, 1764.

Sanhedrim, and was afterwards continued and conducted by Saul, with implacable rage and fury. During this calamity, which lasted in the whole about six years, viz. till the third year of Caligula, A. D. 39 or 40, (when the Jews were too much alarmed concerning their own affairs to give any further disturbance to the Christians), the members of the Christian church stood in need of all the support, consolation, and assistance, that could be administered to them. But what comfort could they possibly receive, in their distressed situation, comparable to that which resulted from the example of their suffering master, and the promise he had made to his faithful followers? This example, and those promises, Saint Matthew seasonably laid before them, towards the close of this season of trial, for their imitation and encouragement, and delivered it to them, as the anchor of their hope, to keep them steadfast in this violent tempest. From this consideration Dr. Owen was led to fix the date of Saint Matthew's Gospel to the year 38.

Thirdly, Saint Matthew ascribes those titles of sanctity to Jerusalem, by which it had been distinguished by the prophets and antient historians *, and also testifies a higher veneration for the Temple than the other evangelists †. His comparative gentleness in mentioning John the Baptist's reproof of Herod, and his silence concerning the insults offered by Herod to our Lord on the morning of his crucifixion, are additional evidences for the early date of his Gospel: for, as Herod was still reigning in Galilee, the evangelist displayed no more of that sovereign's bad character, than was absolutely necessary, lest he should excite Herod's jealousy of his believing subjects or their disaffection to him. If he was influenced by these motives, he must have written before the year 39, for in that year Herod was deposed and banished to Lyons by Caligula.

Lastly, to omit circumstances of minor importance, Matthew's frequent mention (not fewer than nine times) of Pilate, as being then actually governor of Judea, is an additional evidence of the early date of his Gospel. For Josephus ‡ informs us, that Pilate having been ordered by Vitellius, governor of Syria, to go to Rome, to answer a complaint of the Samaritans before the emperor, hastened thither, but be-

* Compare Neh. xi. 1. 18. Isa. xlviii. 2. lii. 1. Dan. ix. 24. with Matt. iv. 5. v. 35. xxvii. 52, 53.

† Compare Matt. xxi. 12. with Mark xi. 15. Luke xix. 45. and Matt. xxvi. 51. with Mark xiv. 58.

‡ Ant. Jud. lib. xviii. c. iv. § 2.

fore he arrived the emperor was dead. Now, as Tiberius died in the spring of 37, it is highly probable that Saint Matthew's Gospel was written by that time*.

Dr. Lardner †, however, and Bishop Percy ‡, think that they discover marks of a lower date in Saint Matthew's writings. They argue from the knowledge which he shows of the spirituality of the Gospel, and of the excellence of the moral above the ceremonial law; and from the great clearness with which the comprehensive design of the Christian dispensation, as extending to the whole Gentile world, together with the rejection of the Jews, is unfolded in this Gospel. Of these topics they suppose the evangelist not to have treated, until a course of years had developed their meaning, removed his Jewish prejudices, and given him a clearer discernment of their nature.

This objection, however, carries but little force with it. For, in the first place, as Dr. Townson has justly observed, with regard to the doctrinal part of his Gospel, if Saint Matthew exhibits a noble idea of pure religion and morality, he teaches no more than he had heard frequently taught, and often opposed to the maxims of the Jews, by his divine instructor. And when the Holy Spirit, the guide into all truth, had descended upon him, it seems strange to imagine that he still wanted twenty or thirty years to enlighten his mind. If he was not then furnished with knowledge to relate these things as an evangelist, how was he qualified to preach them to the Jews as an apostle?

In the next place, it is true that the prophetic parts of his Gospel declare the extent of Christ's kingdom, and the calling and acceptance of the Gentiles. But these events had been plainly foretold by the antient prophets, and were expected by devout Israelites to happen in the days of the Messiah §; and in those passages which relate to the universality of the Gospel dispensation, the evangelist merely states that the Gospel would be successfully preached among the Gentiles in all parts of the earth. He only recites the words of our Saviour without any explanation or remark; and we know it was pro-

* Dr. Townson's Discourses on the Gospels, Works, vol. i. pp. 107—115.

† Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 57, 58; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 163, 164.

‡ Key to the New Test. p. 55. 3d edit.

§ Thus Zacharias, the father of the Baptist, speaks of Christ as coming to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death (Luke i. 79), which description includes the Gentiles; and Simeon expressly calls him a light to lighten the Gentiles (Luke ii. 32).

mised to the apostles, that after Christ's ascension, the Holy Spirit should bring all things to their remembrance, and guide them into all truth. "Whether Saint Matthew was aware of the call of the Gentiles, before the Gospel was actually embraced by them, cannot be ascertained; nor is it material, since it is generally agreed, that the inspired penmen often did not comprehend the full meaning of their own writings when they referred to future events; and it is obvious that it might answer a good purpose to have the future call of the Gentiles intimated in an authentic history of our Saviour's ministry, to which the believing Jews might refer, when that extraordinary and unexpected event should take place. Their minds would thus be more easily satisfied; and they would more readily admit the comprehensive design of the Gospel, when they found it declared in a book, which they acknowledged as the rule of their faith and practice *."

Once more, with respect to the argument deduced from this evangelist's mentioning prophecies and prophetic parables, that speak of the rejection and overthrow of the Jews, it may be observed, that if this argument means, that, being at first prejudiced in favour of a kingdom to be restored to Israel, he could not understand these prophecies, and therefore would not think of relating them if he wrote early;—though the premises should be admitted, we may justly deny the conclusion. Saint Matthew might not clearly discern in what manner the predictions were to be accomplished, yet he must see, what they all denounced, that God would reject those who rejected the Gospel: hence, he always had an inducement to notify them to his countrymen; and the sooner he apprized them of their danger, the greater charity he showed them †.

Since, therefore, the objections to the early date by no means balance the weight of evidence in its favour, we are justified in assigning the date of this Gospel to the year of our Lord 37, or at the latest to the year 38.

III. The next subject of inquiry respects the *language* in which Saint Matthew wrote his Gospel, and which has been contested among critics with no small degree of acrimony; Bellarmin, Grotius, Casaubon, Bishops Walton and Tomline, Drs. Cave, Hammond, Mill, Harwood, Owen, Campbell, and A. Clarke, Simon, Tillemont, Pritius, Du Pin, Calmet, Michaelis, and others, having supported the opinion of Papias as

* Bishop Tomline's Elements of Christ. Theol. vol. i. p. 302.

† Dr. Townson's Discourses, disc. iv. sect. 4. Works, vol. i. pp. 116, 117.

cited by Irenæus, Origen, Cyril, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Jerome, and other early writers, that this Gospel was written in Hebrew, that is, in the Syro-Chaldaic dialect then spoken by the Jews. On the other hand, Erasmus, Paræus, Calvin, Le Clerc, Fabricius, Pfeiffer, Dr. Lightfoot, Beausobre, Basnage, Wetstein, Rumpæus, Whitby, Edelman, Hoffman, Moldenhawer, Viser, Harles, Jones, Drs. Jortin, Lardner, Hey, and Hales, Mr. Hewlett, and others, have strenuously vindicated the Greek original of St. Matthew's Gospel. A third opinion has been offered by Dr. Townson, and some few modern divines, that there were two originals, one in Hebrew and the other in Greek. He thinks that there *seems* to be more reason for allowing two originals than for contesting either; the consent of antiquity pleading strongly for the Hebrew, and evident marks of originality for the Greek.

The presumption, however, is unquestionably in favour of the opinion that Saint Matthew wrote in Greek: for Greek, as we have already seen *, was the prevailing language in the time of our Saviour and his apostles. Matthew, too, while he was a collector of customs, and before he was called to be an apostle, would have frequent occasions both to write and to speak Greek, and could not discharge his office without understanding that language. We may therefore consider it as highly probable, or even certain, that he understood Greek. Besides, as all the other evangelists and apostles wrote their Gospels and Epistles in that language for the use of Christians (whether Jews or Gentiles) throughout the known world; and as Saint Matthew's Gospel, though in the first instance written for the use of Jewish and Samaritan converts, was ultimately designed for universal dissemination, it is not likely that it was written in any other language than that which was employed by all the other writers of the New Testament. This presumption is corroborated by the numerous and remarkable instances of verbal agreement between Matthew and the other evangelists; which, on the supposition that he wrote in Hebrew, or the vernacular Syro-Chaldaic dialect, would not be credible. Even those who maintain that opinion are obliged to confess that an early Greek translation of this Gospel was in existence before Mark and Luke composed their's, which they saw and consulted. After all, the main point in dispute is, whether the present Greek copy is intitled to the *authority* of an original or not: and as this is a question of real and serious importance,

* See Vol. I. pp. 238—243.

we shall proceed to state the principal arguments on both sides.

The modern advocates of the Hebrew Gospel, above enumerated, lay most stress upon the testimonies of Papias (Bishop of Hierapolis A. D. 116), of Irenæus (A. D. 178), and of Origen (A. D. 230); which testimonies have been followed by Chrysostom, Jerome, and others of the early fathers of the Christian church. But these good men, as Wetstein has well observed, do not so properly bear testimony, as deliver their own conjectures, which we are not bound to admit unless they are supported by good reasons. Supposing and taking it for granted that Matthew wrote for the Jews in Judea, they concluded that he wrote in Hebrew*: and because the fathers formed this conclusion, modern writers, relying on their authority, have also inferred that Matthew composed his Gospel in that language. Let us now review their testimonies.

1. Papias, as cited by Eusebius, says †, “Matthew composed the divine oracles in the *Hebrew* dialect, and *each interpreted them as he was able*.”

2. Irenæus, as quoted by the same historian ‡, says, “Matthew published also a Scripture of the Gospel among the Hebrews, in their own dialect.”

3. Origen, as cited by Eusebius §, says, “As I have learned *by tradition* concerning the four Gospels, which alone are received without dispute by the whole church of God under heaven — The first was written by Matthew, once a publican, afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, who published it for the believers from Judaism, *composed in Hebrew letters*.”

In opposition to these testimonies, it is contended by the advocates for the Greek original of the Gospel,

1. That the testimony of Papias, who was a weak and credulous man ||, is vague and indecisive; that he had not seen the Hebrew Gospel itself; that it could not have been intended for universal circulation by his own account, because every one was not able to interpret it; and that the Greek Gospel

* Wetstenii Nov. Test. tom. i. p. 224, note.

† Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Εβραϊδὶ διαλεκτῶ τα λόγια συνεγράψατο ἡρμενεύσε δ' αὐτὰ ὡς ἠδύνατο ἕκαστος. Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. 3. c. 39. tom. i. p. 138. edit. Reading.

‡ Ο μὲν δὲ Ματθαῖος ἐν τοῖς Εβραίοις, ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ αὐτῶν διαλεκτῶ, καὶ γραφὴν ἐξένεγκεν εὐαγγελίου. Ibid. lib. v. c. 8. tom. i. p. 219.

§ Ibid. lib. vi. c. 25. tom. i. p. 290. Ὡς ἐν παραδόσει μαθῶν περὶ τῶν τεσσάρων εὐαγγελίων ὅτι πρῶτον μὲν γεγραπταὶ τὸ κατὰ Μαθαιοῦν ἐκδιδωκὸς τοῖς ἀπὸ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ πιστεύουσι, γραμμασὶν Εβραϊκοῖς συνεταγμένον.

|| See Jortin's Remarks on Eccl. Hist. vol. i. pp. 309, 310. 2d edit.

was published before his time, as appears from the express or tacit references made by the apostolical fathers*, who were all prior to Papias, and all of whom wrote in Greek.

2. The passage of Irenæus above given, more critically translated, may be understood to signify that, in addition to his Greek Gospel, Matthew published ALSO a Hebrew Gospel, for the benefit of the Hebrews, or converts from Judaism, who used no other language but the vernacular dialect of Palestine. This, Dr. Hales thinks, was most probably the fact†. This might be the original basis of the Gospel of the Nazarenes, the Gospel of the Ebionites, the Gospel according to the Hebrews, cited by Origen, Epiphanius, and Jerome, which in process of time became so adulterated by these Judaizing converts, as to lose all authority in the church and be deemed spurious.

3. The testimony of Origen perfectly corresponds with this: for, surely, when he cited *tradition* for the existence of a Hebrew Gospel, written by Matthew for the converts from Judaism, he by no means denied but rather presupposed his Greek Gospel, written for all classes of Christians, *composing the whole church of God under heaven*, for whose use the Hebrew Gospel would be utterly inadequate. In fact, in his treatise on prayer, he intimates that the evangelist published it in Greek also: for, discoursing on the word *ἐπιούσιον*, he considers it as formed by Matthew himself‡. That Origen considered the Greek as the only authentic original in his time, is evident, for the following reasons—1. Origen, in his Hexapla, was accustomed to correct the *Greek* version of the Old Testament by the Hebrew original; but he virtually confesses that he had none by which he could correct the text of Matthew's Gospel§; and, 2. He expressly cites || “a certain Gospel according to the Hebrews, if any one chooses to receive it, not as of *authority*, but for illustration” of the question he was then discussing. Now, if this Hebrew Gospel had been the production of Saint Matthew, he certainly would have cited it in a different manner.

4. In the Gospel of Saint Matthew, as we now have it, there is certainly no appearance of its being a translation; but many

* See the references to them, *infra*, p. 410.

† This conjecture, Dr. Hales remarks, derives additional weight from the incorrect reports of Eutychius and Theophylact, that Matthew wrote his Hebrew Gospel at Jerusalem, which John the Evangelist translated into Greek. *Analysis of Chronology*, vol. ii. book ii. p. 665.

‡ Origen de Oratione, c. 161. p. 150. edit. Reading.

§ See his words, Op. tom. iii. p. 671. edit. De la Rue, or in Bishop Marsh's *Michaelis*, vol. iii. part ii. pp. 114, 115, where they are cited and explained.

|| Dr. Lardner has given the passage at length, *Works*, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 505; 4to, vol. i. p. 553.

considerations prove the contrary. For how can we account for the interpretation of Hebrew names, which, by an author writing in Hebrew, was by no means necessary (compare Matt. i. 23. xxvii. 33. 46). Again, why should the testimonies and parallel passages of the Old Testament be cited, not from the original Hebrew, but generally from the septuagint version, even when that differs from the Hebrew? Lastly, how does it happen, that all the versions which are extant, such as the Latin, the Syriac, the Coptic, the Armenian, and the Ethiopic, are adapted, not to the Hebrew original, but to the Greek translation? These questions are all readily answered, if we admit that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Greek*.

It only remains, that we briefly notice the *third* opinion above mentioned, viz. that there were two originals—one in Hebrew, the other in Greek. but both written by Saint Matthew. This opinion, we believe, was first intimated by Dr. Whitby†, and is adopted by Dr. Hey, Dr. Townson, Bishop Gleig, and some other modern divines. The consent of antiquity pleads strongly for the Hebrew, and evident marks of originality for the Greek. Bishop Gleig thinks, that Saint Matthew, on his departure to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, left with the church of Jerusalem, or at least with some of its members, the Hebrew or Syriac memorandums of our Lord's doctrines and miracles, which he had made for his own use at the time when the doctrines were taught, and the miracles performed; and that the Greek Gospel was written long after the apostles had quitted Jerusalem, and dispersed themselves in the discharge of the duties of their office. This conjecture receives some countenance from the terms in which Eusebius, when giving his own opinion, mentions Saint Matthew's Gospel. "Matthew," says that historian, "having first preached to the Hebrews, delivered to them, when he was preparing to depart to other countries, his Gospel composed in their native language; that to those, from whom he was sent away, he might by his writings supply the loss of his presence§. This opinion is further corroborated by the fact, that there are instances on record, of authors who have themselves published

* Mr. Hewlet's note on Matt. i. 1. Dr. Hales's Analysis, vol. ii. pp. 664—667. Lardner's Supp. to Credibility, chap. 5. (Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 45—65; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 157—167. Pritii, Introd. ad Nov. Test. pp. 298—311. Moldenhawer, Introd. ad Libros Canonicos, pp. 247—254. Michaelis, vol. iii. pp. 112—201. Rumpæi, Comm. Crit. in Nov. Test. pp. 81—84. Viser, Herm. Sac. Nov. Test. pars ii. pp. 344—352. Dr. Campbell's Preface to Matthew, vol. ii. pp. 1—20.

† Preface to Saint Matthew's Gospel, vol. i. p. 1.

‡ Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 4.

§ Lib. i. pref. § 1, 2.

the same work in two languages. Thus Josephus wrote the History of the Jewish War in Hebrew and Greek *. In like manner, we have two originals, one in Latin, the other in English, of the thirty-nine articles of the Anglican church, and also of Sir Isaac Newton's Optics. As Saint Matthew wanted neither ability nor disposition, we cannot think he wanted inducement to "do the work of an evangelist" for his brethren of the common faith, Hellenists as well as Hebrews; to both of whom charity made him a debtor. The popular language of the first believers was Hebrew, or what is called so by the sacred and antient ecclesiastical writers: but those who spoke Greek, quickly became a considerable part of the church of Christ.

From a review of all the arguments adduced on this much litigated question, we cannot but prefer the last stated opinion as that which best harmonizes with the consent of antiquity, namely, that Saint Matthew wrote first a Hebrew Gospel for the use of the first Hebrew converts. Its subsequent disappearance is easily accounted for, by its being so corrupted by the Ebionites that it lost all its authority in the church, and was deemed spurious, and also by the prevalence of the Greek language, especially after the destruction of Jerusalem, when the Jewish language and every thing belonging to the Jews fell into the utmost contempt. It also is clear, that our present Greek Gospel is an authentic original, and consequently an inspired production of the evangelist Matthew, written (not as Bishop Gleig and other writers suppose, long after our Lord's resurrection and ascension, but) within a few years after those memorable and important events †.

IV. Of the genuineness and authenticity of Saint Matthew's Gospel, we have the most satisfactory evidence. There are seven distinct allusions to it in the Epistle of Barnabas; two, in Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians; ten, in the Shepherd of Hermas; nine, in the genuine Epistles of Ignatius; and five, in the Epistle of Polycarp. In the time of Papias, it was well known, and is expressly ascribed to the evangelist by him, and by several antient writers of the first century that were consulted by Eusebius ‡. In the following century it was recog-

* Dr. Hey's Norrisian Lectures, vol. i. pp. 28, 29. Bishop Gleig's edit. of Stackhouse, vol. iii. p. 112. Dr. Townson's Works, vol. i. pp. 30—32.

† There are extant in print two editions of a Hebrew Gospel, one published by Jean de Tilet, Bishop of Brioux, at Paris, in 1555, the other published by Munster, at Basil, in 1557; but it is certain that neither of these is Saint Matthew's original, and that neither of them was used by the Nazarenes or by the Ebionites. See an account of them in Michaelis, vol. iii. pp. 195—201.

‡ Hist. Ecc. lib. 3. c. 36.

nized by Tatian, who composed his harmony of the four evangelists, and by Hegesippus, a Hebrew Christian; and it is repeatedly quoted by Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, and Clement of Alexandria, and also by Celsus, the most sagacious and inquisitive adversary of Christianity. In the third century, Tertullian, Ammonius the author of the harmony, Julius Africanus, and Origen, unanimously quote this Gospel as the undoubted production of Matthew, who are followed by a long train of ecclesiastical writers *. The fact, therefore, is fully established, that Matthew, the apostle of our Saviour, was the author of that Gospel which is placed first in our editions of the New Testament.

V. But, though we have such a chain of unbroken evidence, the most clear and decisive that can possibly be adduced or desired, to the genuineness of Saint Matthew's Gospel, several attempts have of late years been made by those who deny the miraculous conception of our Saviour †, to expunge the two first chapters from the sacred code, as being a spurious interpolation. We have, however, indisputable evidence, both internal and external, that these chapters form an integral part of that Gospel. For, in the first place, the beginning of the third chapter (*Εν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις* *Now in those days*) manifestly shows that something had preceded, to which these words must refer ‡. If we examine the end of the second chapter, where Jesus is said to have come and dwelt with his parents at Nazareth, it will be manifest to what time those words are to be referred. Some indeed have objected that the words "*Now in those days*" are not the words of Matthew, but of his Greek translator, who thus connected the first and second chapters with the third.—But this conjecture (for the objection amounts to nothing more) is opposed by the fact that St. Matthew's Gospel was, as we have already seen, *not* translated into Greek by any person, but was originally written in that language by the evangelist himself. And to mention no other arguments

* For an account of these later writers, see Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 49—52; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 159—161. As the references to Dr. L.'s works for the earlier fathers have already been given in the notes to pp. 348—357, it is not necessary to repeat them.

† Particularly Dr. Williams in his "Free Inquiry," first published in 1771, and again in 1789, 4to; and the editors of the Unitarian Version of the New Testament.

‡ This was agreeable to the usage of the Hebrew writers; who, when commencing their narratives, were accustomed to add the name of the king, prince, or other person, in whose time any event is said to have come to pass, and to preface it with the formula, *In the days of* To mention no other instances, see Isa. i. 1.

by which it is opposed, it is contradicted by the following undisputed passage in Matt. iv. 13, where we read "*And Jesus leaving Nazareth.*" Now, how could Saint Matthew have thus recorded his departure from Nazareth, unless chap. ii. 13. had preceded, where we are told that he came and dwelt in that town? *

In the second place, it is worthy of remark that *the two first chapters of Saint Matthew's Gospel are to be found in ALL the antient manuscripts now extant*, which are entire, as well as in many that have come down to us, mutilated by the hand of time †, and also in all the antient Versions without exception. Some of the manuscripts now extant, particularly the Vatican and the Cambridge manuscripts ‡, are, undoubtedly, of very high antiquity, bearing date from the fifth or sixth centuries at latest, if they are not earlier. The Versions carry us still higher. The *Peschito*, or Old Syriac, and what is called the Old Italic, are nearly co-eval with the formation of the canon of the New Testament. The Coptic, Arabic, and other versions, also bear marks of high antiquity: and though some of them contain discrepancies of more or less moment from the copies generally received, yet *all* of them have this part of the Gospel of Matthew, as integral portions of the whole §.

Much stress, indeed, has been laid upon the genealogy being separated from the other parts of the Gospel in some Latin manuscripts; but the spuriousness of the genealogy is not a necessary consequence of such separation. For, in the first place, as the learned annotators on Michaelis || and Kuinoël ** have both remarked, the transcribers of the Latin manuscripts, who wrote the genealogy detached from the rest of the Gospel, were actuated not by critical but by theological motives. They found difficulty in reconciling the genealogy in Matt. i. with that of Luke iii. and therefore *they wished to get rid of it*. And, secondly, although the genealogy is thus separated in some Latin manuscripts, it does not necessarily follow that the

* Kuinoël, Comm. in Historicos N. T. Libros, vol. i. p. 15.

† The Codex Ebnerianus, a manuscript written at the close of the fourteenth century, begins with Matt. i. 18. *Του δε Ιησου Χριστου η γεννησις ουτως ην*, *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise*. Since no book can well begin with the particle *δε*, *now*, we may conclude that in the more antient Greek manuscripts, whence the Codex Ebnerianus was copied, something preceded, viz. the genealogy, as in other Greek manuscripts. Bishop Marsh's Michaelis, vol. iii. part. ii. p. 136. See also Griesbach's *Επιστολὴν* to his *Commentarius Criticus in Græcum Matthæi Textum*, 4to, Jena, 1801.

‡ See an account of these manuscripts, *infra*, in the Appendix, No. IV.

§ See notices of these versions, Vol. I. pp. 293—297.

|| Bishop Marsh's Michaelis, vol. iii. part. ii. p. 139.

** Kuinoël, Comm. in Historicos Libros Nov. Test. vol. i. p. 13.

copyists either deemed it to be without authority, or were desirous of getting rid of it: for, in the illuminated copies of this Gospel, so far from any stigma being thrown upon the genealogy, (though separated in the way described) it is in general *particularly* embellished, and as much ornamented by the artists as the succeeding passages. Besides the uncontradicted testimony of manuscripts and versions, we have the clear and undisputed evidence of the antient fathers in favour of the genuineness of these chapters, whence they have cited both words and verses in their writings; to which we may add that the earliest opposers of Christianity never appear to have doubted their genuineness. As the miraculous conception of our Saviour is a vital and fundamental doctrine of the Christian revelation, we think it right to state these evidences more particularly.

1. Clement of Alexandria, who lived towards the close of the second century, (A. D. 194) speaking of the order of the Gospels which he had received from the presbyters of more antient times, says expressly that the Gospels containing the genealogies were *first written* *. Here then we have two things proved, viz. the curiosity and inquisitiveness of the antient Christians concerning the books of the New Testament which they had received, and likewise an assurance of the genuineness of the genealogies in Matt. i. and Luke iii. This testimony to the first chapter of Saint Matthew's Gospel is so strong, as to put its antiquity and genuineness beyond all question.

2. In a fragment of the ecclesiastical history composed by Hegesippus, a converted Jew, who flourished A. D. 173, which is preserved by Eusebius †, there is an account of the emperor Domitian's inquiry after the posterity of David, two of whom were brought before him: "*for,*" adds the historian, "*he too was afraid of the coming of Christ, as well as Herod.*" In this passage there is an explicit reference to the second chapter of Matthew, which plainly shows that this portion of his Gospel was received by this Hebrew Christian, who used our Greek Gospel. Or, if he used only the Hebrew edition of Saint Matthew's Gospel, it is equally certain that the historical fact alluded to must have been extant in it in the time of Hegesippus.

* See the passage at length, both in Greek and English, in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 211, 212, and notes; 4to, vol. i. p. 395.

† Eccl. Hist. lib. 3. c. 19, 20. See the original passage in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 142, 143. 4to, vol. i. pp. 356, 357.

3. Justin Martyr, who, we have already seen, flourished about the year 140, has, in his writings, so many and such decisive references to these two chapters, as nearly to supply a recapitulation of all the facts related in them, and in such language as clearly proves that his information was principally derived from those chapters. The very words, also, of Saint Matthew are sometimes quoted with a precision so unequivocal as to determine the source of the quotations. Passages and phrases which occur in Saint Matthew only, and applications of the prophecies of Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah, which are made by no other evangelist, are adopted by him, with a literal adherence to Saint Matthew's text; and what renders the demonstration perfect, with a literal adherence in those very citations from the Old Testament, in which Saint Matthew has departed from the words both of the Hebrew and of the Septuagint*.

4. Ignatius, who flourished A. D. 107, in his Epistle to the Ephesians† has an express reference to the history of the Virgin Mary's miraculous conception of our Lord, and to the appearance of the star that so wonderfully announced his birth. Now, as this father was contemporary with the apostles, and survived the evangelist John only six or seven years, we have in his testimony what amounts to that of the apostles for the truth and authenticity of Saint Matthew's Gospel.

As the testimonies of Irenæus and all the later fathers are undisputed, it is not necessary to adduce their evidence. Let us appeal in the next place to the testimonies of the enemies of Christianity. Three of these are peculiarly distinguished for their enmity to the Christian name and faith; viz. the emperor Julian, who wrote in the middle of the fourth century, Porphyry, who wrote in the third century, and Celsus, who wrote in the middle of the second century. Though their works are lost, their arguments are preserved in the answers of their opponents; and from these it appears that they were by no means deficient in industry to discover means of invalidating any portion of the Gospel history. They stated many objections to particular circumstances in the narrative of the miraculous conception, but never entertained the most remote idea of

* Dr. Magee on the Atonement, vol. ii. p. 440. In pp. 448—454, he has adduced the passages at length from Justin. See also Dr. Lardner's account of Justin, Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 119—122; 4to, vol. i. pp. 343—345.

† Sect. 19. See Cotelierii Patres Apostolici, p. 16.

treating the whole as spurious. They did not contend, as our modern objectors do, that Saint Matthew and Saint Luke never wrote these accounts, but that, in writing them, they committed errors or related falsehoods*. Besides the testimonies of these enemies of the Gospel, we can produce another of still higher antiquity—that of Cerinthus, an heresiarch who was contemporary with the evangelist Saint John. Cerinthus received the Gospel of Saint Matthew (though not entire), and Epiphanius expressly states that his followers “*preferred it on account of its genealogy.*” The same father also records, in terms equally explicit, that “*it is ALLOWED by all, THAT CERINTHUS MADE USE OF THE BEGINNING of Saint Matthew’s Gospel, and from thence endeavoured to prove that Jesus was the Son of Joseph and Mary †.*” To these decisive testimonies of the adversaries of Christianity we add a fact by no means unimportant, as an accessory proof; which is, that no objections were ever brought against these chapters in the early centuries, during the heat of religious contention, when all parties sought to defend themselves, and to assail their opponents, by arguments of all kinds, industriously drawn from every quarter ‡.

Against the weight of this *positive* evidence, which so clearly, fully, and decisively establishes the genuineness of the narratives of the miraculous conception by Matthew and Luke, and places them on the same footing with the other parts of the Gospels, the antagonists of their authenticity have attempted to produce arguments partly external, and partly collateral or internal. With regard to the external evidence, they affirm, on the authority of Epiphanius and Jerome, that these narratives were wanting in the copies used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites, that is, by the antient Hebrew Christians, for whose instruction this Gospel was originally written, and consequently formed no part of the genuine narrative. In this statement the terms Hebrew Christians, Nazarenes, and Ebionites, are classed together as *synonymous*; whereas they were decidedly distinct, as the late Bishop Horsley has long since shown.

The Hebrew Christians, to whom Saint Matthew wrote, were the body of Jewish converts in his time, who laid aside the use of the Mosaic law.

* See the passage of Julian at length, in Lardner, 8vo, vol. viii. p. 397; 4to, vol. iv. p. 334; of Porphyry, in Dr. Mill’s Prologomena to his edition of the New Testament, § 702, 703; and of Celsus, in Lardner, 8vo, vol. viii. pp. 10, 11. 19—22. 58, 59. 63; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 116. 121, 122. 143. 145.

† See the passage of Epiphanius, in Lardner, 8vo, vol. ix. p. 322. 329; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 565. 570.

‡ Quarterly Review, vol. i. p. 321.

Of the Nazarenes there were two descriptions: 1. The Nazarenes of the better sort, who were orthodox in their creed, though they continued to observe the Mosaic Law: but being great admirers of Saint Paul, they could not esteem the law generally necessary to salvation. 2. The Nazarenes of a worse sort were bigotted to the Jewish law, but still orthodox in their creed, for any thing that appears to the contrary. These were the proper Nazarenes mentioned by Epiphanius and Jerome. Both of these classes of Nazarenes believed Jesus Christ to be born of a virgin by the special interposition of God, and consequently received the two first chapters of Saint Matthew's Gospel.

The Ebionites also were divided into two classes: 1. Those, who denied our Lord's divinity, but admitted the fact of miraculous conception: consequently the two first chapters of Matthew were admitted by them; and, 2. Ebionites of a worse sort, who, though they denied the miraculous conception, still maintained an union of Jesus with a divine being, which commenced upon his baptism. These Ebionites, Epiphanius relates, made use of a Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, which was not only defective, but also contained many fabulous stories. The Ebionites, he adds, branched off from the Nazarenes, and did not appear until *after* the destruction of Jerusalem*.

Now, since the Ebionites "of a worse sort," as Bishop Horsley terms them, did not make their appearance until the commencement of the *second* century, and as they used a *mutilated* and *corrupted* copy of Saint Matthew's Gospel, the absence of the two first chapters of Matthew from their Gospel, is so far from making any thing against the authenticity of those chapters, that on the contrary it affords a strong evidence for it; since we are enabled satisfactorily to account for the omission of those chapters in their copies, and to prove from the united antecedent, concurrent, and subsequent testimonies of various writers, both Christians and adversaries of Christianity, that they did exist in all the other copies of Saint Matthew's Gospel, and were explicitly referred to or cited by them†.

* See the various passages of Irenæus, Tertullian, Epiphanius, Jerome, and other fathers, in Lardner, 8vo, vol. viii. pp. 19—24; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 483—485. Bishop Horsley's Tracts in reply to Dr. Priestley, pp. 378—386, (edition of 1789). Mosheim's Commentaries on the Affairs of Christians, vol. ii. pp. 194—204.

† The reader who may be desirous of investigating at length the evidence of the authenticity of Matt. i. and ii. will find it discussed at considerable length in Dr. Nares's masterly Remarks on the Unitarian Version of the New Testament, pp. 4—27, (2d edit.); Dr. Magee's Discourses on the Atonement, vol. ii. part i. pp. 419—454; the Quarterly Review, vol. i. pp. 320—326; and particularly the Sixth Sermon in Mr. Falconer's Bampton Lectures for 1810, pp. 176—207.

The collateral or *internal* arguments against the authenticity of these chapters, deduced from their contents, are such as follow.

1. It has been admitted by many writers that Saint Mark in most places agrees with the method and order both of Saint Matthew and Saint Luke, as also does Saint John, after a short introduction concerning the Logos. Saint Mark begins his Gospel at what we call the third chapter of Saint Matthew, that is, at the time when John came baptizing in the wilderness. It is further urged that, as it is most probable that Saint Luke was the first who published a Gospel; and as he had given the genealogy and a full account of the birth, &c. of Christ, there was no necessity for those who came after him to repeat the same things, as they were not particularly important to the salvation and happiness of man—the great ends which our Saviour and his disciples had in view. Besides, it is alleged that Saint Luke's account of the birth of Jesus, and of all the subsequent events, till Joseph and Mary carried him home to Nazareth, which he has fully detailed, is totally different from that which is found in the first and second chapters of Saint Matthew's Gospel. No coincidence occurs, except in Christ's being born at Bethlehem of a virgin. Hence it is inferred by those who oppose the authenticity of these chapters, that the absolute silence of Saint Luke respecting many remarkable events yields a strong negative argument against it. This inference however is more specious than solid; but before we admit its force, let us examine the premises on which it is founded. The agreement of the four evangelists is readily accounted for, by their narrating the life and transactions of one and the same person. Having either been chosen witnesses of our Saviour's discourses and actions (as Matthew and John were), or having derived their information from others who had been eye-witnesses of them (as Mark and Luke had), they were enabled by inspiration to repeat the former, with little or no variation of words, and to relate the latter without any material variation. They did so in their preaching; and forming the same judgment of the importance of what they had seen and heard, repeated nearly the same things, and the same words. The reason why Saint Mark begins at what we call the third chapter of Matthew is to be found in the object he had in view in writing his Gospel; which, being in all probability written at Rome, was adapted to the state of the church there*. Further, it is *not* probable that Saint Luke's Gospel

* See this proved, Sect. III. § IV. pp. 426, 427. *infra*.

was first written: we have already proved (as far at least as such a thing can now be proved) that Saint Matthew's Gospel was the first composed *, and Saint Luke did not write his Gospel until about the year 63 or 64 †. His account of the birth, &c. of Jesus Christ is totally different from that of Matthew; whose Gospel, being designed for the Hebrew Christians, traces the pedigree of our Saviour in the line of Joseph his *reputed* or legal father, to show the accomplishment of the prophecies contained in the Old Testament respecting the Messiah; and then proceeds to notice the fact that Christ was born in Bethlehem agreeably to the prediction of Micah, without detailing the intermediate circumstances, which in fact were not necessary, as he wrote at a time when those events were fresh in the recollections of his countrymen and contemporaries. Saint Luke, on the contrary, writing for *Gentiles* who were ignorant of Jewish affairs, and after Saint Matthew composed his Gospel, begins his history much farther back than the other evangelists; is particularly careful in specifying times and places; and gives the genealogy of Christ according to his natural descent from the Virgin Mary, and carries it up to Adam, to show that he was that very seed of *the woman*, who was promised for the redemption of the *whole* world. The silence of Saint Luke, therefore, respecting many remarkable events related by Saint Matthew, admits of an easy and satisfactory solution; and concludes nothing against the authenticity of his two first chapters.

2. The appearance of a star in the east, directing the Magi to the new-born Messiah in Judea, (Matt. ii. 1—12) it has been said, has more the air of an eastern invention than of a real history. It is true this has been *said*; but so far is it from being an oriental fiction, that it is referred to *as a fact* by Ignatius ‡, who had conversed familiarly with several of the apostles, and who certainly had better means of ascertaining its reality than any writer of the eighteenth or nineteenth century. The reality of this fact was also admitted by that acute adversary of the Christian faith, Celsus, who flourished towards the close of the second century §.

3. It is said to be a circumstance scarcely credible, that “when Herod had heard these things” (the arrival of the Magi,

* See pp. 400—403. *supra*.

† See Sect. IV. § III. p. 436, *infra*.

‡ Ignatii Epist. ad Ephesios, § 19. apud Cotelerii Patres Apost. tom. ii. p. 51.

§ See the passages at length, in Lardner, 8vo, vol. viii. pp. 11. 59. 63; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 116. 143. 145. The circumstances of the coming of the wise men and their worshipping of the infant Jesus are satisfactorily discussed in Mr. Franks's Hulsean Prize Dissertation on the Magi, 8vo, 1814.

&c.), he was troubled, and *all Jerusalem* with him." Now this circumstance is so far from being incredible, that it is precisely what we should expect from such a character as Herod, and from the situation in which the Jews, and especially the Pharisees, then were. On this subject consult pp. 66, 67 of our first volume.

4. Much stress has been laid on the supposed difficulty of reconciling the genealogies of Christ, as recorded by Saint Matthew and Saint Luke; but the different designs with which those evangelists composed their respective Gospels, completely solve this apparent difficulty; which has also been considered and explained in pp. 436—438 of the first volume of this work.

5. The slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem is further objected against the authenticity of the second chapter of Matthew, because that event is not mentioned by any writer but by the "supposed Saint Matthew, and by those who quote from him." The credibility of this event, and consequently the authenticity of the evangelist, has likewise been established in our first volume (pp. 67, 68).

6. It is alleged that there are in these two chapters several prophecies cited as being fulfilled, but which cannot easily be made to correspond with the events by which they are declared to be accomplished. A little attention, however, to the Hebrew modes of quoting the prophecies* will show the fallacy of this objection. For Isa. vii. 14. cited in Matt. i. 23. and Micah v. 2. cited in Matt. ii. 6. are prophecies quoted as being literally accomplished; and Jer. xxxi. 15. cited in Matt. ii. 17, and Hos. xi. 1, cited in Matt. ii. 15, are passages from those prophets accommodated to similar facts, introduced with the usual formulas of Jewish writers, *That it might be fulfilled, and Then was fulfilled.*

Lastly, it is said that the flight of Joseph with Mary and Jesus into Egypt is inexplicable; that it could not be from Bethlehem, for Luke expressly says, that they continued there forty days (ii. 22), at the expiration of which he was carried to Jerusalem, to be presented to the Lord, and afterwards was taken to Nazareth (39); and that the flight from this latter place was altogether unnecessary, because the slaughter did not extend so far. A little attention, however, to the different orders pursued by the evangelists in their Gospels, will remove this seeming objection; and the different narratives concerning our Lord's infancy, given us by Saint Matthew and Saint Luke,

* On this subject see Vol. I. pp. 511—525.

will appear very consistent, if we only suppose that, immediately after the transactions in the Temple, Joseph and Mary went to Nazareth, as Saint Luke says, but only to settle their affairs there, and soon after returned to Bethlehem, where the report of the shepherds, and the favourable impressions it had made on the inhabitants (see Luke ii. 17, 18), would suggest many cogent motives to fix their abode. There they might have dwelt many months before the arrival of the wise men related by Saint Matthew: for the order issued by Herod for the slaughter of the children, in consequence of the diligent inquiry he had made of the Magi concerning the time when the star appeared, affords us ground to conclude, that a considerable time had intervened between the birth of the child, or the appearance of the star (supposing them to coincide), and the coming of the wise men. It is also worthy of observation, that on Joseph's return from Egypt, his first intention seems to have been to go into Judea (see Matt. ii. 22); but, through fear of Archelaus, and by divine direction, he fixed at Nazareth, the place of his first abode. There he and his family were at the time of the only event of our Lord's childhood, which Saint Luke has recorded, and therefore it was not to his purpose to take notice of any removal or other place of abode*.

To sum up the evidence upon this question, whose importance must apologize for the length of the preceding discussion:—The commencement of the third chapter of Saint Matthew's Gospel shows that something had preceded analogous to what we read in chap. ii. All the antient manuscripts now extant, as well as all the antient versions (two of which are of apostolical antiquity) contain the two first chapters. They are found in a genuine epistle of Ignatius, the only apostolical father who had occasion to refer to them. Justin Martyr, Hegesippus, and Clement of Alexandria, who all flourished in the second century, have referred to them; as also have Irenæus and all the fathers who immediately succeeded him, and whose testimony is undisputed. Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian, the most acute and inveterate enemies of the Gospel, in the second, third, and fourth centuries, likewise admitted them. "Thus, we have one continued and unbroken series of testimony," of Christians as well as of persons inimical to the Christian faith, "from the days of the apostles to the present time; and in opposition to this we find only a vague report of the state of a Hebrew copy

* Dr. Priestley's Notes on the Bible, vol. iii. p. 31. See also Lightfoot's, Doddridge's, and Macknight's Harmonies on Matt. ii.

of Saint Matthew's Gospel, *said* to be received amongst an obscure and unrecognized description of Hebrew Christians, who are admitted, even by the very writers who claim the support of their authenticity, to have mutilated the copy which they possessed, by removing the genealogy." *

VI. The voice of antiquity accords with Irenæus and Eusebius † in testifying that Saint Matthew wrote his Gospel in Judea for the Jewish nation, while the church consisted wholly of the circumcision, that is, of Jewish and Samaritan believers, but principally Jewish; and that he wrote it primarily for their use, with a view to confirm those who believed, and to convert those who believed not, we have, besides historical facts, very strong presumptions from the book itself. Every circumstance is carefully pointed out, which might conciliate the faith of that nation; and every unnecessary expression is avoided, that might in any way tend to obstruct it. To illustrate this remark by a few particulars:—There was no sentiment relating to the Messiah, with which the Jews were more strongly possessed, than that he must be of the race of Abraham, and of the family of David. Matthew therefore, with great propriety, begins his narrative with the genealogy of Jesus; which, agreeably to the Jewish custom, he gives according to his legal descent by Joseph his supposed father, deducing it from Abraham through David, to show his title to the kingdom of Israel. That he should be born at Bethlehem in Judea was another circumstance in which the learned among the Jews were universally agreed: accordingly, this historian has also taken the first opportunity to mention his birth in that town, together with some very memorable circumstances that attended it. Those passages in the prophets, or other sacred books, which either foretel any thing that should happen to the Messiah, or admit of an allusive application to him, or were in that age generally understood to be applicable to events which respect the Messiah, are never passed over in silence by this evangelist. To the Jews, who were convinced of the inspiration of their sacred writings, the fulfilment of prophecy was always strong evidence.: accordingly, neither of the evangelists has been more careful than Matthew that no evidence of this kind should be overlooked ‡.

* Dr. Magee on the Atonement, vol. ii. p. 447.

† Irenæus adv. Hær. lib. iii. c. i. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. v. c. 8. lib. vi. c. 25.

‡ Dr. Campbell's Translation of the Gospels, vol. ii. p. 18. Dr. Townson's Works, vol. i. pp. 121—137.

Further, this evangelist very frequently refers to Jewish customs, and relates most of our Saviour's discourses against the errors and superstitions of the Jews, whose most considerable objections he answers. How admirably his Gospel was adapted to that people, will appear from the following considerations. "The Jews were much disposed to consider the letter of the law as the complete rule and measure of moral duty; to place religion in the observance of rites and ceremonies, or in a strict adherence to some favourite precepts, written or traditionary; to ascribe to themselves sufficient power of doing the divine will without the divine assistance; and, vain of a civil or legal righteousness, to condemn all others, and esteem themselves so just that they needed no repentance, nor any expiation but what the law provided. They rested in the covenant of circumcision and their descent from Abraham as a sure title to salvation, whatever lives they led; and though they looked for a Messiah, yet with so little idea of an atonement for sin to be made by his death, that the cross proved the great stumbling-block to them. They expected him to appear with outward splendour, as the dispenser of temporal felicity; the chief blessings of which were to redound to their own nation in an earthly Canaan, and in conquest and dominion over the rest of mankind. A tincture of these delusive notions, which they had imbibed by education and the doctrine of their elders, would be apt to remain with too many, even after their admission into the church of Christ. How necessary then was it, that just principles concerning the way of life and happiness, and the nature and extent of the Gospel, should be infused into the breasts of these sons of Sion, that they might be able to work out their own salvation, and promote that of others: since they were to be the *salt of the earth*, and *the light of the world*; the first preachers of righteousness to the nations, and the instruments of calling mankind to the knowledge of the truth.

"Saint Matthew, therefore, has chosen, out of the materials before him, such parts of our blessed Saviour's history and discourses as were best suited to the purpose of awakening them to a sense of their sins, of abating their self-conceit and overweening hopes, of rectifying their errors, correcting their prejudices, and exalting and purifying their minds. After a short account, more particularly requisite in the first writer of a Gospel, of the genealogy and miraculous birth of Christ, and a few circumstances relating to his infancy, he proceeds to describe his forerunner John the Baptist, who preached the

necessity of repentance to the race of Abraham and children of the circumcision; and by his testimony prepares us to expect one mightier than he; mightier as a prophet in deed and word, and above the sphere of a prophet, mighty to sanctify by his Spirit, to pardon, reward, and punish by his sovereignty. Then the spiritual nature of his kingdom, the pure and perfect laws by which it is administered, and the necessity of vital and universal obedience to them, are set before us in various discourses, beginning with the sermon on the mount, to which Saint Matthew hastens, as with a rapid pace, to lead his readers. And that the holy light shining on the mind by the word and life of Christ, and quickening the heart by his Spirit, might be seconded in its operations by the powers of hope and fear; the twenty-fifth chapter of this Gospel, which finishes the legislation of Christ, exhibits him enforcing his precepts, and adding a sanction to his laws, by that noble and awful description of his future appearance in glory, and the gathering of all nations before him to judgment. Saint Matthew then, passing to the history of the Passion, shows them that the *new covenant*, foretold by their prophets, was a covenant of spiritual not temporal blessings, established in the sufferings and death of Christ, *whose blood was shed for many, FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS**; which it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away. To purge the conscience from the pollution of dead and sinful works required the blood of Him, *who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God*. With the instructions of Christ are intermixed many hints, that the kingdom of God would not be confined to the Jews, but, while numbers of them were excluded through unbelief, would be increased by subjects of other nations. And thus the devout Israelite was taught, in submission to the will and ordinance of Heaven, to embrace the believing Samaritan as a brother, and to welcome the admission of the Gentiles into the church, which was soon after to commence with the calling of Cornelius. And as they suffered persecution from their own nation, and were to expect it elsewhere in following Christ, all that can fortify the mind with neglect of earthly good, and contempt of worldly danger, when they come in competition with our duty, is strongly inculcated."†

* Matt. xxvi. 28.

† Dr. Townson's Works, vol. i. pp. 5, 7.

VII. The Gospel of Saint Matthew, which comprizes twenty-eight chapters and 1071 verses, consists of four parts, viz.

PART 1. treats on the infancy of Jesus Christ (ch. i. ii).

PART 2. records the discourses and actions of John the Baptist and of Jesus Christ, preparatory to our Saviour's commencing his public ministry (iii. iv. 1—11).

PART 3. relates the discourses and actions of Christ in Galilee, by which he demonstrated that he was the Messiah (iv. 12—xviii. 3).

SECTION 1. Christ goes into Galilee, calls Peter, Andrew, James, and John, and performs various miraculous cures (iv. 12—25).

SECTION 2. The sermon on the mount (v. vi. vii.), showing,

i. Who only are truly happy (v. 1—12), and the duty of Christians to be exemplary (13—16).

ii. The design of Christ's coming, viz. to ratify the divine law (17—20), which had been much impaired by the traditions of the Pharisees—I. IN RESPECT OF ITS EXTENT;—this is exemplified in what concerns, 1. *Murder* (21—26); 2. *Adultery* (27—30); 3. *Divorce* (31, 32); 4. *Oaths* (33—37); 5. *Retaliation* (38—42); 6. *The love of our neighbour* (43—48.)—II. IN RESPECT OF MOTIVE;—where the end is applause, the virtue is destroyed. This is exemplified, 1. *In almsgiving* (vi. 1—3); 2. *In prayer* (4—15); 3. *In fasting* (16—18).

iii. Heavenly-mindedness enforced by various considerations (vi. 19—34).

iv. Cautions against censoriousness in judging of others (vii. 1—5); admonitions to discretion in dispensing religious benefits (6); to assiduity in pursuing spiritual good (7—11); to humanity and equity in our behaviour to all (12); and to withstand all sinful affections (13, 14); warnings against false teachers, who are commonly known by their actions (15—22); the wisdom of adding practice to knowledge, and the insignificancy of the latter without the former (23—29).

SECTION 3. A narrative of several miracles performed by Christ, and of the call of Matthew (viii. ix).

SECTION 4. Christ's charge to his twelve apostles, whom he sent forth to preach to the Jews (x. xi. 1).

SECTION 5. relates the manner in which the discourses and actions of Jesus Christ were received by various descriptions of men, and the effect produced by his discourses and miracles (xi. 2—xvi. 1—12).

SECTION 6. contains the discourses and actions of Christ, immediately concerning his disciples (xvi. 13—xx. 1—16).

PART 4. contains the transactions relative to the passion and resurrection of Christ (xx. 17—xxviii).

SECTION 1. The discourses and miracle of Christ in his way to Jerusalem (xx. 17—34).

SECTION 2. The transactions at Jerusalem until his passion.

- i. *On Palm Sunday* (as we now call it), or the first day of Passion-week, or Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, where he expels the money changers and other traders out of the temple (xxi. 1—17).
- ii. *On Monday*, or the second day of Passion-week.—The barren fig-tree (xxi. 18, 19).
- iii. *On Tuesday*, or the third day of Passion-week.
 - (a) *In the temple*.—The chief priests and elders confuted, 1. By a question concerning John's baptism (xxi. 23—27.)—2. By the parables of the two sons (28—32), and of the labourers of the vineyard (33—44), for which they seek to lay hands on him (45, 46). The parable of the marriage feast (xxii. 1—14). Christ confutes the Pharisees and Sadducees by showing, 1. The lawfulness of paying tribute (xxii. 15—22.)—2. Proving the resurrection (23—33.)—3. The great commandment (34—40), and silences the Pharisees (41—46), against whom he denounces eight woes for their hypocrisy (xxiii. 1—36); his lamentation over Jerusalem (37—39).
 - (b) *Out of the temple*.—Christ's prophetic discourse concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world (xxiv), the parables of the ten virgins and of the talents, and the last judgment (xxv).
- iv. *On Wednesday*, or the fourth day of Passion week.—Christ forewarns his disciples of his approaching crucifixion: the chief priests consult to apprehend him (3—5). A woman anoints Christ at Bethany (xxvi. 6—13).
- v. *On Thursday*, or the fifth day of Passion-week.—Judas covenants to betray him (14—16); the Passover prepared (17—19).
- vi. *On the Passover-day*—that is, from Thursday evening to Friday evening of Passion-week.
 - (a) *In the evening* Christ eats the passover (xxvi. 20—25), and institutes the sacrament of the Lord's Supper (26—29).
 - (b) *In the night* Jesus, 1. Foretells the cowardice of the apostles (xxvi. 33—35.)—2. Is in an agony (36—46.)—3. Is apprehended, reproves Peter and the multitude, and is forsaken by all (47—56.)—4. Is led to Caiaphas, falsely accused, condemned, and derided (57—68.)—5. Peter's denial of Christ and repentance (69—75).
 - (c) *On Friday morning*.—1. Jesus being delivered to Pilate, Judas commits suicide (xxvii. 1—10.)—2. Transactions before Pilate (11—26.)—3. Christ is mocked and led forth (27—32).
 - (d) *Transactions of the third hour*.—The vinegar and gall; the crucifixion; Christ's garments divided; the inscription on the cross; the two robbers; blasphemies of the Jews (xxvii. 33—44).
 - (e) *From the sixth to the ninth hour*.—The darkness over the land; Christ's last agony and death; its concomitant events (xxvii. 45—56); Christ's burial (57—61).

SECTION 3. The translations on the Sabbath of the Passover-week (that is from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday in Passion-week)—The sepulchre of Christ secured, (xxvii. 62—66).

SECTION 4. Transactions after Christ's resurrection, chiefly on Easter-day.

- i. Christ's resurrection testified, first, to the woman by an angel (xxviii. 1—8), and afterwards by Christ himself (9, 10).
- ii. The resurrection denied by his adversaries (xxvii. 11—15) but proved to the apostles (16—20).

VIII. Except Saint John, the evangelist Matthew enjoyed the best opportunity for writing a regular and connected narrative of the life of Christ, according to the order of time and the exact series of his transactions. His style is every where plain and perspicuous, and he is eminently distinguished for the clearness and particularity with which he has related many of our Saviour's discourses and moral instructions. "Of these, his sermon on the mount, his charge to the apostles, his illustrations of the nature of his kingdom, and his prophecy on mount Olivet, are examples. He has also wonderfully united simplicity and energy in relating the replies of his Master to the cavils of his adversaries *." He is the only evangelist who has given us an account of our Lord's description of the process of the general judgment; and his relation of that momentous event is awfully impressive.

* Dr. Campbell on the Gospels, vol. ii. p. 20. Dr. Harwood's Introd. to the New Test. vol. i. p. 176.

SECTION III.

ON THE GOSPEL BY SAINT MARK.

- I. *Author*; — II. *Genuineness and authenticity of this Gospel*; — III. *Probable date*. — IV. *Occasion and scope*; — V. *In what language written*; — VI. *Synopsis of its contents*; — VII. *Examination of the question whether Saint Mark transcribed or abridged the Gospel of Saint Matthew*.

I. **THIS** evangelist was not an apostle or companion of Jesus Christ during his ministry, though Epiphanius and several other fathers affirm that he was one of the seventy disciples. All that we learn from the New Testament concerning him is, that he was "sister's son to Barnabas" (Col. iv. 10), and the son of Mary, a pious woman of Jerusalem, at whose house the apostles and first Christians often assembled (Acts xii. 12). His Hebrew name was John, and Michaelis thinks that he adopted

the surname of Mark when he left Judea to preach the Gospel in foreign countries—a practice not unusual among the Jews of that age, who frequently assumed a name more familiar to the nations which they visited than that by which they had been distinguished in their own country. From Peter's styling him "his son," (1 Pet. v. 13.) this evangelist is supposed to have been converted by Saint Peter: and on his deliverance (A. D. 44, recorded in Acts xii. 12), Mark went from Jerusalem with Paul and Barnabas, and soon after accompanied them to other countries as their minister (Acts xiii. 5); but, declining to attend them through their whole progress, he returned to Jerusalem, and kept up an intercourse with Peter and the other apostles. Afterwards, however, when Paul and Barnabas settled at Antioch on the termination of their journey, we find Mark with them, and disposed to accompany them in their future journeys. At this time he went with Barnabas to Cyprus (Acts xv. 37—39); and subsequently accompanied Timothy to Rome, at the express desire of Saint Paul (2 Tim. iv. 11), during his confinement in that city, whence Mark sent his salutations to Philemon (24), and to the church at Colosse (Col. iv. 10). From Rome he probably went into Asia, where he found Saint Peter, with whom he returned to that city, in which he is supposed to have written and published his Gospel. Such are the outlines of this evangelist's history, as furnished to us by the New Testament. From Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome *, we learn that Mark, after he had written his Gospel, went to Egypt, and, having planted a church at Alexandria, Jerome states that he died and was buried there in the eighth year of the reign of Nero. Baronius Cave, Wetstein, and other writers, affirm that Saint Mark suffered martyrdom; but this fact is not mentioned by Eusebius or any other antient writer, and is contradicted by Jerome, whose expressions seem to imply that he died a natural death.

II. That Saint Mark was the author of the Gospel which bears his name, is proved by the unanimous testimony of antient Christians, particularly Papias †, by several antient writers of the first century consulted by Eusebius ‡, by Justin Martyr §, Tatian ||, Irenæus **, Clement of Alexandria ††, Tertul-

* See the passages of these writers in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 82—84; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 176, 177.

† A. D. 116. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 109, 112; 4to, vol. i. pp. 338, 339.

‡ Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 33.

§ A. D. 140. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 120; 4to, vol. i. p. 344.

|| A. D. 172. Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 138; 4to, vol. i. p. 354.

** A. D. 178. Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 158, 159; 4to, vol. i. pp. 365, 366.

†† A. D. 194. Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 211, 212; 4to, vol. i. p. 395.

lian *, Ammonius †, Origen ‡, and by all the fathers of the third and following centuries. Though not cited by name, this Gospel appears to have been alluded to by Clement of Rome in the first century ||; but the testimony of antiquity is not equally uniform concerning the order in which it should be placed. Clement of Alexandria affirms that the Gospels containing the genealogies were first written: according to this account, Mark wrote after Saint Luke; but Papias, on the information of John the presbyter, a disciple of Jesus, and a companion of the apostles, expressly states that it was the second in order; and with him agree Irenæus and other writers.

III. Although the genuineness and authenticity of Saint Mark's Gospel are thus satisfactorily ascertained, considerable uncertainty prevails as to the time when it was composed. It is allowed by all the antient authors that Saint Mark wrote it at Rome; and many of them assert that he was no more than an amanuensis or interpreter to Peter, who dictated this Gospel to him, though others affirm that he wrote it after Saint Peter's death. Hence a variety of dates has been assigned between the years 56 and 65; so that it becomes difficult to determine the precise year when it was written. But as it is evident from the evangelist's own narrative (Mark xvi. 20), that he did not write until after the apostles had dispersed themselves among the Gentiles, and had preached the Gospel every where, "the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following;" and as it does not appear that *all* the apostles quitted Judea earlier than the year 50 **, (though several of them laboured among the Gentiles with great success, perhaps we shall approximate nearest to the real date, if we place it between the years 60 and 63.

IV. Saint Peter having publicly preached the Christian religion at Rome, many who were present entreated Mark, as he had for a long time been that apostle's companion, and had a clear understanding of what Peter had delivered, that he would commit the particulars to writing. Accordingly, when Mark had finished his Gospel, he delivered it to the persons who made this request. Such is the unanimous testimony of

* A. D. 200. Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 257, 258; 4to, vol. i. p. 420.

† A. D. 220. Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 414, *et seq.*; 4to, vol. i. pp. 503, *et seq.*

‡ A. D. 230. Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 466, 467; 4to, vol. i. p. 332.

§ See the later testimonies in Lardner, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 87—90; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 179, 180.

|| Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 31; 4to, vol. i. p. 294.

** See Dr. Lardner's Supplement to his Credibility, chap. 7. where this subject is amply discussed. Works, 8vo, vol. viii. pp. 65—77; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 167—173.

antient writers*, which is further confirmed by internal evidence, derived from the Gospel itself. Thus the great humility of Peter is conspicuous in every part of it, where any thing is related or might be related of him; his weaknesses and fall being fully exposed to view, while the things which redound to his honour are either slightly touched or wholly concealed. And with regard to Christ, scarcely any action that was done, or word spoken by him, is mentioned, at which this apostle was not present, and with such minuteness of circumstance as shows that the person who dictated the Gospel had been an eye-witness of the transactions recorded in it.†

From the Hebraisms discoverable in the style of this Gospel, we should readily conclude that its author was by birth and education a Jew: but the numerous Latinisms‡ it contains not only show that it was composed by a person who had lived among the Latins, but also that it was written beyond the confines of Judea. That this Gospel was designed principally for Gentile believers (though we know that there were some Jewish converts in the church at Rome), is further evident from the explanations introduced by the evangelist, which would have been unnecessary, if he had written for Hebrew Christians exclusively. Thus, the first time the Jordan is mentioned, the appellation “river,” is added to the name (Mark i. 5). Again, as the Romans could not understand the Jewish phrase of “*defiled or common hands*,” the evangelist adds the parenthetical explanation of “*that is, unwashen*” (vii. 2). When he uses the word *corban*, he subjoins the interpretation, “*that is, a gift*” (vii. 11); and instead of the word *mammon*, he uses the common term *χρηματα*, ‘riches.’ Again, the word Gehenna, which in our version is translated *hell* (ix. 43), originally signified the valley of Hinnom, where infants had been sacrificed by fire to Moloch, and where a continual fire was afterwards maintained to consume the filth of Jerusalem. As this word could not have been understood by a foreigner, the evangelist adds the words “unquenchable fire” by way of explanation. These particularities corroborate the historical evidence above cited, that Saint Mark designed his Gospel for the use of Gentile Christians. §

* Clemens Alexandr. apud Eusebii, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 14. Jerome, de Viris illustribus, cap. viii. Tertulliani Opera, p. 505, edit. Rigaltii.

† See several instances of this adduced in Dr. Townson's Works, vol. i. pp. 151—163.

‡ Several of these Latinisms are specified in Vol. I. pp. 245, 246, of this work.

§ Dr. Campbell's Pref. to Mark, vol. ii. pp. 82, 83.

Lastly, the manner in which Saint Mark relates the life of our Saviour is an additional evidence that he wrote for Gentile Christians. His narrative is clear, exact, and concise, and his exordium is singular; for while the other evangelists style our Saviour '*the Son of Man*,' Saint Mark announces him at once as the *Son of God* (i. 1), an august title, the more likely to engage the attention of the Romans; omitting the genealogy of Christ, his miraculous conception, the massacre of the infants at Bethlehem, and other particulars, which could not be essentially important in the eyes of foreigners.

V. That this evangelist wrote his Gospel in Greek is attested by the uninterrupted voice of antiquity; nor was this point ever disputed until the cardinals Baronius and Bellarmine, anxious to exalt the language in which the Latin Vulgate version was executed, affirmed that Saint Mark wrote in Latin. This assertion, however, not only contradicts historical evidence, but (as Michaelis has well observed) is in itself almost incredible: for, as the Latin church, from the very earliest ages of Christianity, was in a very flourishing state, and as the Latin language was diffused over the whole Roman empire, the Latin original of Saint Mark's Gospel, if it had ever existed, could not have been neglected in such a manner as that no copy of it should descend to posterity. Further, the same arguments, by which we have already proved that Saint Matthew wrote in Greek, and not in Hebrew, are equally applicable to demonstrate that Saint Mark did not write in Latin. The only *semblance* of testimony, that has been produced in support of this opinion, is the subscription annexed to the old Syriac version that Saint Mark wrote in the Romish, that is, in the Latin language, and that in the Philoxenian version, which explains Romish by *Frankish*. But subscriptions of this kind are of no authority whatever: for their authors are unknown, and some of them contain the most glaring errors. Besides, as the Syriac version was made in the East, and taken immediately from the Greek, no appeal can be made to a Syriac subscription in regard to the language in which Saint Mark wrote at Rome*. The advocates for the Latin original of this Gospel have appealed to a Latin manuscript pretended to be the autograph of the evangelist himself, and said to be preserved in the library of Saint Mark at Venice. But this is now proved to be a mere fable: for the Venetian manuscript formerly made part of the Latin manuscript preserved at Friuli, most of which was printed by Blanchini in

* Michaelis, vol. iii. p. 225.

his Evangelium Quadruplex. The Venice manuscript contained the first forty leaves, or five quaternions of Saint Mark's Gospel; the two last quaternions or twenty leaves are preserved at Prague, where they were printed by M. Dobrowsky, under the title of *Fragmentum Pragense Evangelii S. Marci vulgo autographi*. 1778. 4to. *

VI. The Gospel of Saint Mark consists of sixteen chapters, which may be divided into three parts, viz.

PART 1. The transactions from the baptism of Christ to his entering on the more public part of his ministry (ch. i. 1—13).

PART 2. The discourses and actions of Jesus Christ to his going up to Jerusalem to the fourth and last passover (i. 14—x).

SECTION 1. The transactions between the first and second passovers (i. 14—45. ii. 1—22).

SECTION 2. The transactions between the second and third passovers (ii. 23—28. iii—vi.)

SECTION 3. The transactions of the third passover to Christ's going up to Jerusalem to the fourth passover (vii—x).

PART 3. The passion, death, and resurrection of Christ (xi—xiv).

SECTION 1. The *first day* of Passion-week, or Palm Sunday—Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem (xi. 1—11).

SECTION 2. The transactions on the *second day*, or Monday (xi. 12—19).

SECTION 3. The transactions on the *third day*, or Tuesday—
i. In the morning (xi. 20—33. xii).
ii. In the evening (xiii).

SECTION 4. The transactions of the *fourth day*, or Wednesday (xiv. 1—9).

SECTION 5. The transactions of the *fifth day*, or Thursday (xiv. 10—16).

SECTION 6. The transactions of the *Passover-day*, that is, from Thursday evening to Friday evening of the Passion-week; including the institution of the Lord's supper, Christ's agony in the garden, his being betrayed by Judas, his trial, crucifixion, and burial (xiv. 17—72. xv).

SECTION 7. The transactions after the resurrection of Christ (xvi).

* There is a particular account of the Prague Fragment of Saint Mark's Gospel, by Schœpflin, in the third volume of the *Historia et Commentationes Academiae Electoralis Theodoro-Palatinae*, 8vo, Mannheim, 1773; in which a fac-simile is given. The account is abridged and the fac-simile copied in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1778, vol. xlv. pp. 321, 322.

VII. From the striking coincidence between the Gospel of Mark and that of Matthew, several learned men have imagined that Mark compiled his Gospel from him. Augustine was the first who asserted that Mark was a servile copyist (*pedissequus*) and epitomizer of Matthew, and his opinion has been adopted by Simon, Calmet, Owen, Harwood, and others.

In the year 1782, Koppe published a dissertation *, in which he has proved that this hypothesis is no longer tenable, and Michaelis has acquiesced in the result of his inquiries. The following observations are chiefly abridged from both these writers.

The assertion, that Mark abridged the Gospel of Matthew, contradicts the unanimous voice of antiquity, which states that Mark wrote his Gospel under the inspection and dictation of Peter; and, although there is a coincidence between these two evangelists, yet it does not thence necessarily follow that he abridged the Gospel of Matthew. For, in the first place, he frequently deviates from Matthew in the order of time, or in the arrangement of his facts †, and likewise adds many things of which Matthew has taken no notice whatever ‡. Now, as Matthew was an apostle, and eye-witness of the facts which he related, Mark could not have desired better authority; if, therefore, he had Saint Matthew's Gospel before him when he wrote his own, he would scarcely have adopted a different arrangement, or have inserted facts which he could not have found in his original author.

Again, although there are several parts of Saint Matthew's Gospel which an evangelist, who wrote chiefly for the use of the Romans, might not improperly omit — such as the genealogy — the healing of the centurion's servant at Capernaum — Christ's argument to John's disciples, to prove that he was the Messiah — the sermon on the mount — some prophecies from the Old Testament — and the narrative of the death of Judas Iscariot; — yet, on the other hand, there are several relations in Saint Matthew's Gospel, for the omission of which it is very difficult to assign a reason, and which therefore lead to the conclusion that this Gospel was not used by Saint Mark. — See particularly the discourses and parables related in Matt. viii.

* The title of this tract is *Marcus non Epitomator Marci*. It was reprinted by Pott and Ruperti in their *Sylloge Commentationum Theologicarum*, 8vo, Helmstadt.

† Koppe has given *thirteen* instances. See Pott's *Sylloge*, pp. 55—57.

‡ Koppe has given *twenty-three* instances of these additions. *Ibid.* pp. 59—64.

18—22; x. 15—22; xi. 20—30; xii. 33—45; xiii. 1—39; xviii. 10—35; xix. 10—12; xx. 16; and xxii. 1—14.*

Lastly, Saint Mark's imperfect description of Christ's transactions with the apostles, after his resurrection, affords the strongest proof that he was totally unacquainted with the contents of Saint Matthew's Gospel. The latter evangelist has given us a very circumstantial description of Christ's conversation with his apostles on a mountain in Galilee: yet the former, though he had before related Christ's promise that he would go before them into Galilee, has, in the last chapter of his Gospel, no account whatever of Christ's appearance in Galilee. Now, if he had read Saint Matthew's Gospel, this important event could not have been unknown to him, and consequently he would not have neglected to record it.

Michaelis further observes, that "if Saint Mark had had Saint Matthew's Gospel before him, he would have avoided every appearance of contradiction to the accounts given by an apostle and an eye-witness. His account of the call of Levi, under the very same circumstance as Saint Matthew mentions his own call, is at least a variation from Saint Matthew's description; and this very variation would have been avoided, if Saint Mark had had access to Saint Matthew's Gospel. The same may be observed of Mark x. 46, where only one blind man is mentioned, whereas Saint Matthew, in the parallel passage, mentions two. In Saint Mark's account of Saint Peter's denial of Christ, the very same woman, who addressed Saint Peter the first time, addressed him likewise the second time, whereas, according to Saint Matthew, he was addressed by a different person: for Saint Mark (xiv. 69.) uses the expression *ἡ παιδίσκη*, *the maid*, which, without a violation of grammar, can be construed only of the same maid who had been mentioned immediately before, whereas Saint Matthew (xxvi. 71) has *ἄλλη*, *another maid*†. Now, let the harmonists reconcile these examples

* Koppe has specified several other omissions in the Gospel of Saint Mark, which we have not room to enumerate. See Pott's *Sylloge*, pp. 49—53.

† The whole difficulty, in reconciling this apparent discrepancy between the two evangelists, "has arisen from the vain expectation that they must always agree with each other in the most minute and trivial particulars; as if the credibility of our religion rested on such agreement, or any reasonable scheme of inspiration required this exact correspondency. The solution, which Michaelis afterwards offered in his *Anmerkungen*, affords all the satisfaction which a candid mind can desire. After stating that Matthew had said "another maid," Mark "the maid," and Luke "another man," (*ἄνθρωπος*), he observes, the whole contradiction vanishes at once, if we only attend to John, the quiet spectator of all which passed. For he writes (xviii. 25) "*They* said unto him, Wast thou not also one of his disciples?" Whence it appears that there were

in whatever manner they please, there will always remain a difference between the two accounts, which would have been avoided, if Saint Mark had copied from Saint Matthew. But what shall we say of instances, in which, as far as I am able to judge, there is no mode of reconciliation? If we compare Mark iv. 35. and i. 35. with Matt. viii. 28—34, we shall find not only a difference in the arrangement of the facts, but such a determination of time as renders a reconciliation impracticable. For, according to Saint Matthew, on the day after the sermon on the mount, Christ entered into a ship, and crossed the lake of Gennesareth, where he underwent a violent tempest: but, according to Saint Mark, this event took place on the day after the sermon in parables; and, on the day which followed that on which the sermon on the mount was delivered, Christ went, not to the sea-side, but to a desert place, whence he passed through the towns and villages of Galilee. Another instance, in which we shall find it equally impracticable to reconcile the two evangelists, is Mark xi. 28. compared with Matt xxi. 23. In both places the Jewish priests propose this question to Christ, *ἢ ποία ἐξουία ταῦτα ποιεῖς*; alluding to his expulsion of the buyers and sellers from the temple. But, according to what Saint Mark had previously related in the same chapter, this question was proposed on the third day of Christ's entry into Jerusalem: according to Saint Matthew, it was proposed on the second. If Saint Mark had copied from Saint Matthew, this difference in their accounts would hardly have taken place". *

Since, then, it is evident that Saint Mark did not copy from the Gospel of Saint Matthew, the question recurs, how are we to reconcile the striking coincidences between them, which confessedly exist both in style, words, and things? Koppe, and after him Michaelis, endeavoured to account for the examples of verbal harmony in the three first Gospels, by the supposition that in those examples the evangelists retained the words which had been used in more antient Gospels; such as those mentioned by Saint Luke in his preface †. But there does not appear to be any necessity for resorting to such an hypothesis:

several who spake on this occasion, and that all which is said by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, may very easily be true. There might probably be more than the three who are named; but the maid, who had in a former instance recognized Peter, appears to have made the deepest impression on his mind; and hence, in dictating this Gospel to Mark, he might have said *the maid*." Bishop Middleton's *Doctrine of the Greek Article*, p. 285.

* Michaelis, vol. iii. p. 220. Koppe (*ut supra*, pp. 57—59) has given several additional examples of apparent contradictions between the two evangelists, proving that Mark could not have copied from Matthew.

† Pott's *Sylloge Comment.* pp. 65—69. Michaelis, vol. iii. pp. 214, 215.

for, in the first place, it contradicts the accounts given from the early Christian writers above cited; and, secondly, it may be accounted for from other causes. Saint Peter was, equally with Saint Matthew, an eye-witness of our Lord's miracles, and had also heard his discourses, and on some occasions was admitted to be a spectator of transactions to which all the other disciples were not admitted. Both were Hebrews, though they wrote in Hellenistic Greek. Saint Peter would therefore naturally recite in his preaching the same events and discourses which Matthew recorded in his Gospel; and the same circumstances might be mentioned in the same manner by men, who sought not after "excellency of speech," but whose minds retained the remembrance of facts or conversations which strongly impressed them, even without taking into consideration the idea of supernatural guidance*.

Simplicity and conciseness are the characteristics of Saint Mark's Gospel, which, considering the copiousness and majesty of its subject,—the variety of great actions it relates, and the surprising circumstances that attended them, together with the numerous and important doctrines and precepts which it contains, is the shortest and clearest, the most marvellous, and at the same time satisfactory history in the whole world.

* Pritii, *Introd. ad Lectionem Nov. Test.* p. 179. Bishop Tomline's *Elements of Christ. Theol.* vol. i. p. 319.

SECTION IV.

ON THE GOSPEL BY SAINT LUKE.

- I. *Author*;—II. *Genuineness and authenticity of Saint Luke's Gospel, particularly of the two first chapters*;—III. *Date, and where written*;—IV. *For whom written*;—V. *Occasion and scope of this Gospel*;—VI. *Synopsis of its contents*;—VII. *Observations on this Gospel.*

1. **CONCERNING** this evangelist we have but little certain information: from what is recorded in the Scriptures, as well as from the circumstances related by the early Christian writers, the following particulars have been obtained.

According to Eusebius, Saint Luke was a native of Antioch, by profession a physician, and for the most part a companion of the apostle Paul. The report, first announced by Nicephorus Callisti, a writer of the fourteenth century, that he

was a painter, is now justly exploded, as being destitute of foundation, and countenanced by no antient writers. From his attending Saint Paul in his travels, and also from the testimony of some of the early fathers, Basnage, Fabricius, and Dr. Lardner have been led to conclude, that this evangelist was a Jew, and Origen, Epiphanius, and others have supposed that he was one of the seventy disciples; but this is contradicted by Luke's own declaration that he was not an eye-witness of our Saviour's actions. Michaelis is of opinion that he was a Gentile, on the authority of Saint Paul's expressions in Col. iv. 10. 11. 14. The most probable conjecture is that of Bolten, adopted by Kuinöel, viz. That Saint Luke was descended from Gentile parents, and in his youth had embraced Judaism, from which he was converted to Christianity. The Hebraic-Greek style of writing observable in his writings, and especially the accurate knowledge of the Jewish religion, rites, ceremonies, and usages, every where discernible both in his Gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles, sufficiently evince that their author was a Jew; while his intimate knowledge of the Greek language, displayed in the preface to his Gospel, which is composed in elegant Greek, and his Greek name Λουκας, evidently show that he was descended from Gentile parents. This conjecture is further supported by a passage in the Acts, and by another in the Epistle to the Colossians. In the former (Acts xxi. 27.) it is related that the Asiatic Jews stirred up the people, because Paul had introduced Gentiles into the temple, and in the following verse it is added, that they had before seen with him in the city Trophimus, an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple. No mention is here made of Luke, though he was with the apostle. Compare Acts xxi. 15. 17, where Luke speaks of himself among the companions of Paul. Hence we infer that he was reckoned among the Jews, one of whom he might be accounted, if he had become a proselyte from Gentilism to the Jewish religion. In the Epistle to the Colossians (iv. 11. 14), after Paul had written the salutations of Aristarchus, Marcus, and of Jesus surnamed Justus, he adds, "*who are of the circumcision.* These only," he continues, "are my fellow-workers (meaning those of the circumcision) unto the kingdom of God." Then in the fourteenth verse, he adds "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, salute you." As the apostle in this passage opposes them to the Christians who had been converted from Judaism, it is evident that Luke was descended from Gentile parents.

The first time that this evangelist is mentioned in the New Testament, is in his own history of the Acts of the Apostles. We there find him (Acts xvi. 10, 11), with Saint Paul at Troas; thence he attended him to Jerusalem; continued with him in his troubles in Judea; and sailed in the same ship with him, when he was sent a prisoner from Cæsarea to Rome, where he stayed with him during his two years' confinement. As none of the antient fathers have mentioned his suffering martyrdom, it is probable that he died a natural death *.

II. The genuineness and authenticity of Saint Luke's Gospel, and of his history of the Acts of the Apostles, are confirmed by the unanimous testimonies of the antient writers. The Gospel is alluded to by the apostolical fathers, Barnabas †, Clement of Rome ‡, Hermas §, and Polycarp ||. In the following century it is repeatedly cited by Justin Martyr **, by the martyrs of Lyons ††, and by Irenæus ‡‡. Tertullian §§, at the commencement of the third century, asserted against Marcion the genuineness and integrity of the copies of Saint Luke's Gospel, which were admitted to be canonical by himself and Christians in general, and for this he appealed to various apostolical churches. Origen |||, a few years after, mentions the Gospels in the order in which they are now generally received; the third of which, he says, "is that according to Luke, the Gospel commended by Paul, published for the sake of the Gentile converts. These testimonies are confirmed by Eusebius, the Pseudo-Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory Nyssen, Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, and a host of later writers; whose evidence, being collected by the accurate and laborious Dr. Lardner ***, it is not necessary here to state.

Notwithstanding this unbroken chain of testimony to the genuineness and authenticity of Saint Luke's Gospel, an attempt has of late years been made, by those who deny the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ, to impugn the authority

* Lardner's Supplement to his Credibility, chap. viii. 8vo, vol. viii. pp. 105—107. 4to, vol. iii. pp. 187, 188.

† Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 15; 4to, vol. i. p. 285.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 31; 4to, vol. i. p. 294.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 55; 4to, vol. i. pp. 307, 308.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 93; 4to, vol. i. p. 328.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 120; 4to, vol. i. p. 344.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 150; 4to, vol. i. p. 361.

‡‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 159, 160; 4to, vol. i. p. 366.

§§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 258; 4to, vol. i. p. 420.

||| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 466; 4to, vol. i. p. 532.

*** Ibid. 8vo, vol. viii. pp. 107—112; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 188—191.

of the two first chapters. It is admitted that they are to be found in all the manuscripts and versions at present known; but, because they were not found in the copies used by Marcion, the founder of the sect of Marcionites in the second century, it is affirmed that they are spurious interpolations. A little consideration will show the falsehood of this assertion. The notions entertained by Marcion were among the wildest that can be conceived;—that our Saviour was man only in outward form; that he was not born like other men, but appeared on earth full-grown. He rejected the Old Testament altogether, as proceeding from the Creator, who, in *his* opinion, was void of goodness; and of the New Testament he received only the Gospel of Saint Luke and ten of Saint Paul's Epistles, all of which he mutilated, especially Saint Luke's Gospel, which he completely disguised by his alterations, interpolations, and omissions*. This conduct of Marcion's completely invalidates any argument that may be drawn from the omission of the two first chapters of Saint Luke's Gospel in *his* copy; and when it is added that his arbitrary interpolations, &c. of it were exposed by several contemporary writers, and particularly by Tertullian†, we conceive that the genuineness and authenticity of the two chapters in question are established beyond the possibility of doubt‡.

III. With regard to the time when this Gospel was written, there is some difference of opinion; Dr. Owen and others referring it to the year 53, while Michaelis, Lardner, and the majority of biblical critics, assign it to the year 63 or 64, which date appears to be the true one, and corresponds with the internal characters of time exhibited in the Gospel itself. But it is not so easy to ascertain the place where it was written. Jerome says that Luke, the third evangelist, published his Gospel in the countries of Achaia and Bœotia; Gregory Nazianzen also says, that Luke wrote for the Greeks, or in Achaia. Grotius states, that, about the time when Paul left

* Epiphanius has given a long account of Marcion's alterations, &c. of the New Testament. See Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ix. pp. 369—393; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 610—624.

† See the passage at length in Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 256—258; 4to, vol. i. pp. 419, 420.

‡ Much stress has been laid upon the apparent discrepancy between the genealogies of Jesus Christ in Luke iii. and Matt. i. and also on the *supposed* chronological difficulty in our Saviour's age: but as these seeming contradictions have already been satisfactorily explained in pp. 436—438 and 456 of our first volume, it is not necessary to repeat those solutions in this place. See also Dr. Nares's Remarks on the Unitarian Version of the New Testament, pp. 27, *et seq.*

Rome, Luke departed to Achaia, where he wrote the books we now have. Dr. Cave was of opinion that they were written at Rome before the termination of Paul's captivity, but Drs. Mill and Grabe, and Wetstein, affirm that this Gospel was published at Alexandria in Egypt, in opposition to the Pseudo-Gospel circulated among the Egyptians. Dr. Lardner has examined these various opinions at considerable length, and concludes that, upon the whole, there is no good reason for supposing that Saint Luke wrote his Gospel at Alexandria, or that he preached at all in Egypt: on the contrary, it is more probable that when he left Paul, he went into Greece, and there composed or finished and published his Gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles. *

IV. That Saint Luke wrote his Gospel for the benefit of Gentile converts, is affirmed by the unanimous voice of Christian antiquity, and it may also be inferred from his dedicating it to one of his Gentile converts. This indeed appears to have been its peculiar design: for, writing to those who were far remote from the scene of action, and ignorant of Jewish affairs, it was requisite that he should descend to many particulars, and touch on various points, which would have been unnecessary, had he written exclusively for Jews. Hence he explains various matters relative to the Jewish worship and customs; begins his history so much further back than the other evangelists, and is particularly careful in specifying times and places. On this account also he gives the genealogy of Christ, not as Saint Matthew had done, by showing that Jesus was the son of David, from whom the Scriptures taught the Jews that the Messiah was to spring; but he traces Christ's lineage up to Adam, (agreeably to the mode of tracing genealogies in use among the Gentiles), by ascending from the person whose lineage was given to the founder of his race; and thus shows that Jesus is the seed of the woman, who was promised for the redemption of the whole world. Further, as the Gentiles had but little knowledge of Jewish transactions, Saint Luke has marked the æras when Christ was born, and when John began to announce the Gospel, by the reigns of the Roman emperors—to which point Saint Matthew and the other evangelists have not attended. Saint Luke has likewise introduced many things not noticed by the other evangelists, which encouraged the Gentiles to hearken to the Gospel, and, when their consciences were awakened by it, to turn to God in

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 130—136; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 199—202.

newness of life, with a pleasing prospect of pardon and acceptance. Of this description are the parables of the publican praying in the temple (xviii. 10), and of the lost piece of silver (xv. 8—10), and particularly the prophetic parable of the prodigal son (which beside its spiritual and universal application, beautifully intimates that the Gentile, represented by the younger or prodigal son, returning at length to his heavenly father, would meet with the most merciful, gracious, and affectionate reception (xv. 11, *et seq.*) Christ's visit to Zaccheus the publican (xix. 5), and the pardon of the penitent thief on the cross (xxiii. 40—43), are also lively illustrations of the mercy and goodness of God to penitent sinners.

Lest, however, doubts should arise whether any but the lost sheep of the house of Israel were interested in these good tidings, other parables and facts are introduced which cannot be taken in this limited sense. Thus, Saint Luke recites a parable in praise of a merciful Samaritan (x. 33); he relates that another Samaritan was healed and commended for his faith and gratitude (xvii. 19); and, when a village of this people proved rude and inhospitable, that the zeal of the two apostles who wished to consume them by fire from heaven was reproved (ix. 52—56); and they were told that “*the son of man came, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*”

Lastly, this evangelist inserts examples of kindness and mercy shown to the Gentiles. Thus, our Saviour, in the very first public discourse recorded in Saint Luke's Gospel, takes notice that such favours were vouchsafed to the widow of Sarepta and Naaman the Syrian, both Gentiles, as were not conferred, in like circumstances, on any of the Israelites (iv. 25—27). And the prayer upon the cross (xxiii. 34), “*Father, forgive them, for they know what they do,*” is placed between the act of crucifying our Lord and that of parting his raiment, both of which were performed by the Roman soldiers; to whom, therefore, this prayer must have respect, as much as to any of his persecutors. *

V. Great and remarkable characters always have many biographers. Such appears to have been the case with our Saviour, whose life was so beautiful, his character so sublime and divine, his doctrine so excellent, and the miracles by which he confirmed it were so illustrious and so numerous, that it was impossible but many should undertake to write evangelical narrations, or short historical memoirs concerning his life, doc-

* Dr. Townson's Works, vol. i. pp. 181—196.

trines, and transactions, which are now lost. This we infer from Saint Luke's introduction to his Gospel (i. 1—4); from which we learn, in the first place, that the writers alluded to were not our evangelists Saint Matthew and Saint Mark, who were the only evangelists that can be supposed to have written before Saint Luke: for Saint Matthew was an eye-witness, and wrote from personal knowledge, not from the testimony of others; and *two* cannot with propriety be called *many*. In the next place, it is to be observed, that these narrations consisted of "*those things which are most surely believed among us*"—that is, of the things performed by Jesus Christ, and confirmed by the fullest evidence, among the first professors of the Christian faith, of which number Saint Luke reckons himself. Lastly, from the words of that introduction it appears, that those narrations were received either from the apostles themselves, or from their assistants in the work of the Gospel; and that they were composed with an upright intention, though they were inaccurate and defective. What these imperfect and incorrect histories of our Saviour were, it is impossible now to determine, as they are not mentioned by any contemporary writer, and probably did not survive the age when they were composed. *

The *scope* of Saint Luke's Gospel therefore was, to supersede the defective and unauthentic narratives which were then in circulation, and to deliver to Theophilus † a true and genuine account of the life, doctrines, miracles, death, and resurrection of our Saviour. Some of the fathers imagined that Saint Luke derived his information chiefly from the apostle Paul, and that he wrote his Gospel at his command; but this conjecture is contradicted by the evangelist's own words; whence we are au-

* Mill's Proleg. § 35—37. Doddridge's Fam. Expos. vol. i. p. 1. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 142—145; 4to, vol. i. pp. 205, 206.

† As the literal import of this name is *friend of God*, some have imagined that, under this appellation, Saint Luke comprized all the followers of Christ, to whom, as *friends of God*, he dedicated this faithful history of our Saviour. But this interpretation appears to have little solidity in it: for, if all the followers of Christ are addressed, why is the *singular* number used? and what good end could there be accomplished by using a feigned name? Augustine, Chrysostom, and many others, have understood Theophilus to be a real person; and Theophylact has well remarked that he was a man of senatorial rank, and possibly a prefect or governor, because he gives him the same title of *καταξιος*, *most excellent*, which Saint Paul used in his addresses to Felix and Festus. Dr. Cave supposed him to have been a nobleman of Antioch, on the authority of the pretended Clementine Recognitions; but these are of no weight, being composed at the end of the second century, and not from the writer's personal knowledge. The most probable opinion is that of Dr. Lardner, now generally adopted, viz. that, as Saint Luke composed his Gospel in Greece, Theophilus was a man of rank of the same country. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 138, 139; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 203, 204. Doddridge, Campbell, Whitby, &c. on Luke i. 1—4.

thorized to conclude that he obtained his intelligence principally from those who had both heard and witnessed the discourses and miracles of Jesus Christ. Now it is manifest that Saint Paul was not of this number, for he was not converted to the Christian faith until the end of the year 36, or perhaps the beginning of the year 37. It was from conversing with some of the apostles or immediate disciples of our Lord, that Luke was enabled to trace every thing from the beginning, and that Theophilus might know the certainty of those truths of which he had hitherto received only the first elements.

VI. From some striking coincidences between certain passages in Saint Luke's Gospel and the parallel passages in that of Saint Matthew *, Rosenmüller and some other critics have imagined that the former had seen the Gospel of the latter, and that he transcribed considerably from it. But this conjecture does not appear to have any solid foundation: for, in the first place, it is contradicted by the evangelist Luke himself, who expressly says that he derived his information from persons who had been eye-witnesses; which sufficiently accounts for those coincidences. Further, Saint Luke has related many interesting particulars †, which are not at all noticed by Saint Matthew. And, lastly, the order of time, observed by these two evangelists, is different. Saint Matthew narrates the facts

* Compare Luke iii. 7—9. 16, 17. with Matt. iii. 7—12; Luke v. 20—38. with Matt. ix. 2—17; Luke vi. 1—5. with Matt. xii. 1—5; Luke vii. 22—28. with Matt. xi. 4—11; and Luke xii. 22—31. with Matt. vi. 25—33. Rosenmüller says that Bengel's mode of comparing and harmonizing the Gospels of Saint Matthew and Saint Luke is the best.

† Thus Saint Luke has recorded the circumstances relating to the birth of John the Baptist; the annunciation; and other important circumstances concerning the nativity of the Messiah; the occasion of Joseph's being then in Bethlehem; the vision granted to the shepherds; the early testimony of Simeon and Anna; the wonderful manifestation of our Lord's proficiency in knowledge, when only twelve years old; and his age at the commencement of his ministry, connected with the year of the reigning emperor. He has given us also an account of several memorable incidents and cures which had been overlooked by the rest; the conversion of Zaccheus the publican; the cure of the woman who had been bowed down for eighteen years; and of the dropsical man; the cleansing of the ten lepers; the repulse he met with when about to enter a Samaritan city; and the instructive rebuke he gave, on that occasion, to two of his disciples for their intemperate zeal: also the affecting interview he had, after his resurrection, with two of his disciples, in the way to Emmaus, and at that village. Luke has likewise added many edifying parables to those which had been recorded by the other evangelists. Of this number are the parable of the creditor who had two debtors; of the rich fool who hoarded up his increase, and, when he had not one day to live, vainly exulted in the prospect of many happy years; of the rich man and Lazarus; of the reclaimed profligate; of the Pharisee and the Publican praying in the temple; of the judge who was prevailed on by a widow's importunity, though he feared not God, nor regarded man; of the barren fig-tree; of the compassionate Samaritan; and several others. It is worthy of remark, that most of these particulars were specified by Irenæus, in the second century, as peculiarly belonging to the Gospel of Saint Luke; who has thus, undesignedly, shown

recorded in his Gospel, *chronologically*; Saint Luke, on the contrary, appears to have paid but little attention to this order, because he proposed to make a *classification* of events, referring each to its proper class, without regard to chronological arrangement.

The Gospel of Saint Luke, which consists of twenty-four chapters, is divided by Rosenmüller and others into five distinct classes or sections, viz.

CLASS 1. contains the narrative of the birth of Christ, together with all the circumstances that preceded, attended, and followed it (i. ii. 1—40).

CLASS 2. comprizes the particulars relative to our Saviour's infancy and youth (ii. 41—52).

CLASS 3. includes the preaching of John, and the baptism of Jesus Christ, whose genealogy is annexed (iii).

CLASS 4. comprehends the discourses, miracles, and actions of Jesus Christ, during the whole three years of his ministry (iv—ix. 50). This appears evident: for, after Saint Luke had related his temptation in the wilderness (iv. 1—13), he immediately adds, that Christ returned to Galilee (14), and mentions Nazareth (16), Capernaum (31), and the lake of Gennesareth (v. 1); and then he proceeds, as far as ix. 50, to relate our Saviour's transactions in Galilee.

CLASS 5. begins with chap ix. 51, and contains an account of our Saviour's last journey to Jerusalem. Consequently this class comprizes every thing relative to his passion, death, resurrection, and ascension (ix. 51—62. x—xxiv).

The plan of classifying events, adopted by Saint Luke, has been followed by other historical writers. Thus Suetonius. after exhibiting a brief summary of the life of Augustus previous to his acquiring the sovereign power, announces his intention of recording the subsequent events of his life, not in order of time, but arranging them into *distinct* classes; and then proceeds to give an account of his wars, honours, legislation, discipline, and private life. *

VII. If Saint Paul had not informed us (Col. iv. 14) that Saint Luke was by profession a physician, and consequently a man of letters, his writings would have sufficiently evinced that he had had a liberal education; for, although his Gospel pre-

to all succeeding ages, that it is, in every thing material, the very *same* book which had ever been distinguished by the name of this evangelist till his day, and remains so distinguished to our times. Dr. Campbell on the Gospels, vol. ii. p. 126. See the passage of Irenæus in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 160, 161; 4to, vol. i. pp. 366, 367.

* Suetonius in Augusto. c. ix. (al. xii) p. 58, edit. Bipont. This historian has pursued the same method in his life of Cæsar.

sents as many Hebraisms perhaps as any of the sacred writings, yet his language contains more numerous Græcisms than that of any other writer of the New Testament. The style of this evangelist is pure, copious, and flowing, and bears a considerable resemblance to that of his great master Saint Paul. Many of his words and expressions are exactly parallel to those which are to be found in the best classic authors; and several eminent critics have long since pointed out the singular skill and propriety with which Saint Luke has named and described the various diseases which he had occasion to notice. As an instance of his copiousness, Dr. Campbell has remarked, that each of the evangelists has a number of words, which are used by none of the rest; but in Saint Luke's Gospel, the number of such words as are used in none of the other Gospels, is greater than that of the peculiar words found in all the other three Gospels put together; and that the terms peculiar to Luke are for the most part long and compound words. There is also more of composition in his sentences than is found in the other three Gospels, and consequently less simplicity. Of this we have an example in the first sentence, which occupies not less than four verses. Further, Saint Luke seems to approach nearer to the manner of other historians, in giving what may be called his own verdict in the narrative part of his work. Thus, he calls the Pharisees *φιλαργυροί*, *lovers of money* (xvi. 14); and, in distinguishing Judas Iscariot from the other Judas, he uses the phrase *ὃς καὶ ἐγένετο προδοτῆς*, *who also proved a traitor* (vi. 16). Saint Matthew (x. 4.) and Saint Mark (iii. 19.) express the same sentiment in milder language—*who delivered him up*. Again, the attempt made by the Pharisees, to extort from our Lord what might prove matter of accusation against him, is expressed by Saint Luke in more animated language than is used by either of the rest (xi. 53): “*They began vehemently to press him with questions on many points.*” And, on another occasion, speaking of the same people, he says that *they were filled with madness* (vi. 11). Lastly, in the moral instructions given by our Lord, and recorded by this evangelist, especially in the parables, no one has surpassed him in uniting affecting sweetness of manner with genuine simplicity, particularly in the parables of the benevolent Samaritan and the penitent prodigal. *

* Dr. Campbell on the Gospels, vol. ii. pp. 126—129. Rosenmüller, Scholia in Nov. Test. vol. ii. pp. 3—6. Kuinöel, Comment. in Libros Hist. Nov. Test. vol. ii. pp. 213—230. Bishop Marsh's Michaelis, vol. iii. part i. pp. 228—271. Pritii, Introd. ad Nov. Test. pp. 181—195. Viser, Herm. Sacr. Nov. Test. pars i. pp. 333—339. pars ii. pp. 205—209. 221, *et seq.* 264. Rumpæi, Comm. Crit. in Libros Nov. Test. pp. 81. 88.

SECTION V.

ON THE SOURCES OF THE FIRST THREE GOSPELS.

- I. *Different hypotheses stated*; — II. *Examination of the hypothesis, that the evangelists abridged or copied from each other*; — III. *Examination of the hypothesis, that the evangelists derived their information from a primary Greek or Hebrew document*; — IV. *And of the hypothesis, that they consulted several documents*; — V. *That the only document consulted by the three first evangelists was the preaching of our Saviour himself.*

I. **THAT** the Gospels of Saint Matthew, Saint Mark, and Saint Luke should contain so much verbal agreement, and yet that there should exist such striking differences as appear in the parallel accounts of these three evangelists when they relate the same discourses or transactions, is indeed a most remarkable circumstance. Hence several eminent writers have been induced to discuss this singular fact with great ability and equal ingenuity: and although the testimonies which we have to the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels, are so clear and decisive, as to leave no doubt in the minds of private Christians; yet, since various learned men have offered different hypotheses to account for, and explain, these phenomena, the author would deem his labours very imperfect, if he suffered them to pass unnoticed.

Three principal hypotheses have been offered, to account for these verbal similarities and occasional differences between the three first evangelists, viz. 1. That one or two of the Gospels were taken from another; 2. That all three were derived from some original document common to the evangelists; —and, 3. That they were derived from detached narratives of part of the history of our Saviour, communicated by the apostles to the first converts to Christianity. We shall briefly state the arguments that have been offered for and against these various hypotheses.

II. The first and most commonly received opinion has been, that one or two of the first three evangelists had copied or abridged from the third, or one from the other two; but which was the original writer, and which were the copyists, are topics concerning which various conjectures have been given. This opinion has been advocated by Grotius, Wetstein, Drs. Owen, Townson, Mill, Harwood, and Hales, and also by Griesbach:

but, besides that it *weakens* the testimony of the evangelists by reducing three to two, or even to one, it is contradicted by the following weighty considerations.

1. *It does not appear that any of the learned antient Christian writers had a suspicion, that either of the first three evangelists had seen the other Gospels before he wrote his own.* They say indeed, ‘that when the three first written Gospels had been delivered to all men, they were also brought to Saint John, and that he confirmed the truth of their narration; but said that there were some things omitted by them which might be profitably related:’ or, ‘that he wrote last, supplying some things which had been omitted by the former evangelists.’ To mention no others, Eusebius Bishop of Cæsarea*, Epiphanius†, Theodore of Mopsuestia‡, and Jerome§, express themselves in this manner. Towards the close of the fourth century, indeed, or early in the fifth, Augustine|| supposed that the first three evangelists were not totally ignorant of each other’s labours, and considered Saint Mark’s Gospel as an abridgment of Saint Matthew’s: but he was the first of the fathers who advocated that notion, and it does not appear that he was followed by any succeeding writers, until it was revived in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by Grotius and others.

2. *It is not suitable to the character of any of the evangelists, that they should abridge or transcribe another historian.*

Saint Matthew was an apostle and an eye-witness, and consequently was able to write from his own knowledge; or, if there were any parts of our Lord’s ministry at which he was not present, he might obtain information from his fellow-apostles or other eye-witnesses. And, with respect to things which happened before the calling of the apostles, (as the nativity, infancy, and youth of Christ), the apostles might ascertain them from our Saviour himself, or from his friends and acquaintance, on whose information they could depend.

Saint Mark, if not one of Christ’s seventy disciples, was (as we have already seen**) an early Jewish believer, acquainted with all the apostles, and especially with Saint Peter, as well as with many other eye-witnesses: consequently he was well qualified to write a Gospel; and that he did not *abridge* Saint

* See the passages from Eusebius in Dr. Lardner’s Works, 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 226, 227; 4to, vol. ii. p. 369.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 314, 315; 4to, vol. ii. p. 418.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 511, 512; 4to, vol. ii. p. 529.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. v. p. 41; 4to, vol. ii. p. 553.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. v. p. 93; 4to, vol. ii. p. 583.

** See pp. 424, 425, *supra*.

Matthew, we have shown by an induction of various particulars * Saint Luke, though not one of Christ's seventy disciples, nor an eye-witness of his discourses and actions, was a disciple and companion of the apostles, and especially of Paul: he must therefore have been well qualified to write a Gospel. Besides, as we have shown in a former page †, it is manifest from his introduction, that he knew not of any authentic history of Jesus Christ that had been then written: and he expressly says, that he had accurately traced all things from the source in succession or order, and he professes to write of them to Theophilus. After such an explicit declaration as this is, to affirm that he transcribed many things from one historian, and still more from another, is no less than a contradiction of the Evangelist himself.

3. *It is evident from the nature and design of the first three Gospels, that the evangelists had not seen any authentic written history of Jesus Christ.*

There can be no doubt but that Saint John had seen the other three Gospels; for, as he is said to have lived to a great age, so it appears from his Gospel itself that he carefully avoided the repetition of things related in them, except a few necessary facts. But there is no certain evidence, either that Saint Mark knew that Matthew had written a Gospel before him, or that Saint Luke knew that the two evangelists had written Gospels before him. If Saint Mark had seen the work of Matthew, it is likely that he would have remained satisfied with it as being the work of an apostle of Christ, that is, an eye-witness, which he was not. Nor would Saint Luke, who, from the beginning of his Gospel, appears to have been acquainted with several memoirs of the sayings and actions of Christ, have omitted to say that one or more of them was written by an apostle, as Matthew was.

His silence therefore is an additional proof that the three first evangelists were totally unacquainted with any previous authentic written history of Christ.

4. *The seeming contradictions ‡, which exist in the first three Gospels (all of which, however, admit of easy solutions), are an additional evidence that the evangelists did not write by concert, or after having seen each other's Gospels.*

* See pp. 430—433, *supra*.

† See p. 439, *supra*.

‡ On this subject, see Vol. I. pp. 435—452, particularly pp. 436—439, in which the apparent contradictions between the genealogies recorded by Saint Matthew and Saint Luke are particularly considered.

5. *In some of the histories recorded by all these three evangelists, there are small varieties and differences, which plainly show the same thing.*

In illustration of this remark, it will suffice to refer to and compare the accounts of the healing of the demoniac or demoniacs in the country of the Gadarenes (Matt. viii. 28—34. with Mark v. 1—20, and Luke viii. 26—40); the account of our Lord's transfiguration on the mount (Matt. xvii. 1—13, with Mark ix. 1—13, and Luke ix. 28—36), and the history of the healing of the young man after our Saviour's descent from the mount (Matt. xvii. 14—21. with Mark ix. 14—29, and Luke ix. 37—42). In each of the accounts here cited, the agreeing circumstances, which are discoverable in them, clearly prove that it is the same history, but there are also several differences equally evident in them. Whoever therefore diligently attends to these circumstances, must be sensible that the evangelical historians did not copy or borrow from each other.

6. *There are some very remarkable things related in Saint Matthew's Gospel, of which neither Saint Mark nor Saint Luke has taken any notice.*

Such are the extraordinary events recorded in Matt. ii. xxvii. 19. xxvii. 51—53. and xxviii. 11—15: some or all of which would have been noticed by Saint Mark or Saint Luke, had they written with the view of abridging or confirming Saint Matthew's history. It is also very observable, that Saint Luke has no account of the miracle of feeding "four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fishes," which is related in Matt. xv. 32—39. and Mark viii. 1—9. The same remark is applicable to Saint Luke's Gospel, supposing (as Dr. Mac-knight and others have imagined) it to have been first written, as it contains many remarkable things not to be found in the other Gospels. Now, if Saint Matthew or Saint Mark had written with a view of abridging or confirming Luke's history, they would not have passed by those things without notice.

7. *All the first three evangelists have several things peculiar to themselves; which show that they did not borrow from each other, and that they were all well acquainted with the things of which they undertook to write a history.*

Many such peculiar relations occur in Saint Matthew's Gospel, besides those just cited; and both Saint Mark * and Saint

* See pp. 431, 432. *supra*, of this volume.

Luke *, as we have already seen, have many similar things, so that it is needless to adduce any additional instances.

8. Lastly, Dr. Mill has argued that the *similarity of style and composition* is a proof that these evangelists had seen each other's writings: but this argument in Dr. Lardner's judgment is insufficient. In fact, Mill himself allows † that a very close agreement may easily subsist between two authors writing on the same subject in the Greek language. ‡

III. The second hypothesis, by which some distinguished critics have attempted to explain the verbal harmony observable in the first three Gospels, is that which derives them from some common Greek or Hebrew document or source, which occasioned the evangelists so frequently to adopt the same terms and forms of expression. Le Clerc § was the first writer to whom this idea occurred; and after it had lain dormant upwards of sixty years, it was revived and advocated by Koppe ||, by Michaelis in the fourth (German) edition of his introduction to the New Testament, by Lessing, Niemeyer, and others, but especially by Eichorn, of whose various modifications of this hypothesis the learned translator of Michaelis has given an interesting account **. The common document, whence the three evangelists drew their materials, Eichorn supposed to be in Hebrew or Chaldee. After many preparatory steps, assigning reasons for the rejection of other hypotheses, and various forms of this hypothesis, the Bishop of Landaff proposes his own in the following terms, marking the common Hebrew document, which he supposes the evangelists to have consulted, by the sign $\aleph$, and certain translations of it with more or less additions by the letters, α , β , &c.

“Saint Matthew, Saint Mark, and Saint Luke, all three, used copies of the common Hebrew document $\aleph$: the materials of which Saint Matthew, who wrote in Hebrew, retained in the language in which he found them, but Saint Mark and Saint Luke translated them into Greek. They had no knowledge of each other's Gospels: but Saint Mark and Saint Luke, beside their copies of the Hebrew document $\aleph$, used a Greek translation of it, which had been made, before

* See p. 440, note †, *supra*, of this volume.

† Millii, Proleg. § 108.

‡ Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 223—233; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 245—250.

§ Hist. Eccl. sæc. i. ann. lxiv. sect. x. p. 429, cited by Bishop Marsh in his Dissertation on the Origin of the Three First Gospels, in vol. iii. part ii. p. 429 of his Translation of Michaelis.

|| In his Dissertation entitled *Marcus non Epitomator Matthæi*. See Pott's Sylloge, pp. 65—68.

** Bishop Marsh's Michaelis, vol. iii. part ii. pp. 184—205.

any of the additions α , β , &c. had been inserted. Lastly, as the Gospels of Saint Mark and Saint Luke contain Greek translations of Hebrew materials, which were incorporated into Saint Matthew's Hebrew Gospel, the person who translated Saint Matthew's Hebrew Gospel into Greek frequently derived assistance from the Gospel of Saint Mark, where Saint Mark had matter in common with Saint Matthew: and in those places, but in those places only, where Saint Mark had no matter in common with Saint Matthew, he had frequently recourse to Saint Luke's Gospel." *

The hypothesis thus stated and determined, its author conceives, will account for all the phenomena relative to the verbal agreement and disagreement of our first three Gospels, as well as for the other manifold relations which they bear to each other; and he has accommodated it with great attention to particular circumstances, enumerated by him in the former part of his "Dissertation on the Origin of the Three First Gospels," which circumstances, however, we have not room to detail. This document, he thinks, may have been entitled, in Greek, ΔΙΗΓΗΣΙΣ περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων, καθὼς παρέδωσαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτοπταὶ καὶ ὑπηρέται τοῦ λόγου, that is, A NARRATIVE of those things which are most firmly believed among us, even as they, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, delivered them unto us. Consequently, if this conjecture be well founded, the document in question is actually referred to by Saint Luke †. In addition also to this supposed first Hebrew document & and its translations, Bishop Marsh supposes the existence of a supplemental Hebrew document, which he calls ζ, and which contained a collection of *precepts*, *parables*, and *discourses*, delivered by our Saviour on various occasions, but not arranged in chronological order. This he terms a Γνωμολογία, and conceives that it was used only by Saint Matthew and Saint Luke, who had copies of it differing from each other. The hypothesis thus stated by the learned prelate, has been adopted by Kuinöel ‡, Schoell §, and other later Ger-

* Ibid. p. 361. The hypothesis of the learned prelate was controverted by the late Lord Bishop of London (Dr. Randolph) in his "Remarks on Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament, vols. iii. and iv." 8vo, London, 1802; by the editors of the "British Critic," vol. xxi. (O.S.) pp. 178, *et seq.*; by Mr. Veysie, in his Examination of Mr. Marsh's Hypothesis, 8vo, London, 1808; by Mr. Falconer, in his Bampton Lectures for the year 1810, pp. 105, *et seq.*; and by Bishop Gleig, in his recent edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. iii. pp. 103—112. Our statements in the following pages are an abstract of the arguments adduced by these eminent critics.

† Michaelis, vol. iii. part ii. pp. 363, 368.

‡ Comm. in Hist. Lib. Nov. Test. vol. i. pp. 1—9.

§ Histoire Abrégée de la Littérature Grécque, tom. ii. pp. 66—82.

man critics: but in this country it has been controverted by the late Bishop of London *, Bishops Middleton †, and Gleig ‡, the editors of the British Critic §, and other distinguished writers ||; of whose arguments and reasonings the following is an abstract.

Supposing such a theory to be necessary, in order to account for the verbal similarities and differences of the first three evangelists (which necessity however is by no means admitted), the obvious fault of this hypothesis is its extreme complexity. Here are two Hebrew documents, and several Greek versions, with additions gratuitously supposed, which the algebraical notations, introduced by their author, can scarcely enable the reader to distinguish from each other. To describe the sources of Saint Matthew's Gospel by this method, not fewer than seven marks are employed; viz. $\aleph$, α , γ , A , Γ^1 , Δ , and Γ^2 . Besides these, there are the marks peculiar to Saint Luke or Saint Mark, β , B , and $\bar{\aleph}$,—in all, ten different signs standing for so many separate documents or modifications of documents; and all these gratuitously supposed without proof for the existence of one among the number. This hypothesis Bishop Marsh considers as simple; but, with every possible deference to such an authority in all matters respecting Biblical Literature, it is submitted, that few persons will be found to coincide in his opinion. And although he states with respect to the steps of this hypothesis, that “there is no improbability attending any one of them; they are neither numerous nor complicated;” yet we must observe that, altogether, they are numerous, and consequently, by the combinations supposed in their application, they become extremely complicated. Further, though no particular step may be in itself improbable, yet the discovery of *ten* different sources to certain works, by mere analysis, is a circumstance of the highest improbability, and forms such a discovery as was never yet made in the world, and probably never will be made; because, if not absolutely impossible, it approaches so nearly to impossibility, that the mind can scarcely conceive a distinction. **

* Dr. Randolph, in his “Remarks on Michaelis's Introduction, 8vo, vols. iii. and iv.” London, 1802.

† On the Doctrine of the Greek Article, pp. 288—291.

‡ In his valuable edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. iii. pp. 103—112.

§ Brit. Crit. vol. xxi. (O. S.) pp. 178, *et seq.*

|| Particularly Mr. Veysie, in his “Examination of Mr. Marsh's Hypothesis,” 8vo, London, 1808, and Mr. Falconer, in his Bampton Lectures for 1810, pp. 105, *et seq.* See also the Christian Observer for 1808, vol. viii. pp. 623—628.

** Brit. Crit. vol. xxi. (O. S.) p. 180.

To consider this objection more fully—If the hypothesis of the learned prelate would solve without difficulty, or exception, all the phenomena* of every description, the total silence of ecclesiastical antiquity presents a direct and invincible argument against the existence of the primary document which he has designated by the Hebrew letter $\aleph$. To begin with the age of the apostles,—is it to be supposed that there ever existed a work of such approved excellence, and such high authority, as to become the basis of the first three Gospels, and yet that nothing—not even the memory of it—should survive that age†? “Were we indeed as certain, that the apostles, before they separated, had really met for the purpose of drawing up a copious and authentic history of their Divine Master’s life and doctrines, as we are that an authentic record was kept at Jerusalem of the reigns of the different kings, the state of religion under each, and the preaching of the prophets, this would be by much the easiest, and perhaps the most satisfactory method of accounting as well for the harmony as for the discrepancies which we find among the several abridgments made by the first three evangelists. But, that the apostles met for such a purpose as this, before they left Jerusalem, has never been supposed: and indeed the hypothesis, had it even been made and supported by the most unexceptionable testimonies of the earliest uninspired writers of the church, would deserve no regard whatever, unless these writers had each declared, without collusion among themselves, that he had possessed a copy of the original record. Even then, unless a copy of it were still in existence, from which we might, from internal evidence, decide on its claims to an apostolical origin, we should hesitate, after the imposture of the book called the “*Apostolical Constitutions*,” to admit the authenticity of such a record. The apostles, in a state of persecution, had not the same facilities for publicly recording the actions of their Lord as the ministers of state, called the *Scribe* and the *Recorder*, possessed in the kingdom of Judah and Israel, for writing registers of the deeds of their respective sovereigns; nor do we ever find the evangelists appealing to any such such record, while the writers of the historical books of the Old Testament frequently appeal to the annals or chro-

* Mr. Veysie has instituted a minute examination of Bishop Marsh’s statement of the phenomena observable in the first three Gospels, in which he has shown its incompetency to explain those phenomena. As this investigation is not of a nature to admit of abridgment, we refer the reader, to Mr. V.’s “*Examination*,” pp. 12—50.

† On the subject, here necessarily touched upon with brevity, see Mr. Falconer’s Bampton Lectures for 1810, pp. 115—120.

nicles of the kingdom.* A common record, from which all the evangelists selected the materials of their histories, must therefore be abandoned as an hypothesis perfectly groundless, notwithstanding all the learning and ingenuity which have been displayed (we are sure, *with the best intentions*) in support of that hypothesis."†

If we consult the writings of the apostolical fathers, who were the immediate disciples of the apostles and evangelists, we shall find that the same silence prevails among them; for, although they did not cite by name the various books of the New Testament (the canon not being completed until the close of the first century), yet in their allusions to the evangelical writings they refer to our four Gospels, and do not so much as intimate the existence of any other document. Ignatius, who flourished in the beginning of the second century (A. D. 107), is supposed to have mentioned the book of the Gospels under the term 'Gospel,' and the Epistles under that of 'Apostles'‡; but as this point has been controverted by learned men, we shall waive any positive evidence which might be offered from his writings, observing only that he no where alludes or refers to any other books of the New Testament, besides those which have been transmitted to us; and that his silence concerning the existence of any other document, affords a very strong presumptive argument against its existence. Let us now consider the evidence of the fathers who were either contemporary with Ignatius, or lived within a few years of his time. The first witness we shall adduce is Papias, who flourished A. D. 116, and had conversed with apostolical men, that is, with those who had been the immediate disciples of the apostles. It is remarkable that this father refers to no primary document whatever; but, on the contrary, he bears a most express testimony to the number of the Gospels, which were only *four*, in his day§. Four-and-twenty years afterwards lived Justin Martyr, whose evidence is still more explicit:—for, instead of quoting any such source, under the name of *Απομνημονευματα των Αποστολων*, or "Memoirs of the Apostles," he expressly declares that he means the *Gospels* ||. Tatian, Irenæus, Theophilus Bishop of

* See, among a variety of such appeals, 1 Kings xiv. 19. and 1 Chron. xxvii. 24.

† Bishop Gleig's edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. iii. p. 103.

‡ On this topic, see Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 81; 4to, vol. i. p. 322.

§ See the testimony of Tatian in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 107—110; 4to, vol. i. pp. 337, 338.

|| In his First Apology for the Christians, which was delivered to the Emperor Antoninus Pius (c. 66), Justin gives the following reason for the celebration of the Lord's Supper among the Christians:—"For the Apostles, in the *Memoirs* (*απομνημονευμασιν*)

Antioch—and, in short, every subsequent ecclesiastical writer of antiquity, is equally explicit as to the number of the Gospels, and equally silent as to the existence of any source whence the evangelists derived the materials of their Gospels. *

It remains only that we notice the conjecture of the learned prelate above noticed †, that Saint Luke referred to such primary document, and that it was called ΔΙΗΓΗΣΙΣ, that is 'the Narrative': but the absence of the Greek article is fatal to this conjecture, and proves that the supposed document never existed ‡. To this consideration we may add, that the incongruities and apparent contradictions, which (as we have seen) form a strong objection against the supposition that the evangelists copied from each other, form an objection no less strong against the supposition that they all copied from one and the same document, : for if, as this hypothesis requires, they all adhered to their document, no difference could have arisen between them; but they would all have agreed in relating the same thing in the same manner, as much as they must have done, if they had copied from each other. If, in order to avoid this difficulty, it be supposed that they did not all adhere

composed by them, which are called GOSPELS (ακαλειται ΕΤΑΓΓΕΛΙΑ), have thus assured us, that Jesus ordered them to do it; that he took bread, gave thanks, and then said, 'This do in remembrance of me; this is my body:' that in like manner he took the cup, and, after he had given thanks, said, 'This is my blood.'—And in another passage (c. 67), when giving the emperor an account of the Christian worship, he says, "The *Memoirs of the Apostles* are read, or the Writings of the Prophets, according as time allows; and, when the reader has ended, the president of the community makes a discourse exhorting them to the imitation of such excellent things."—An evident proof this, that so early as the beginning of the second century, the four Gospels, (and no greater number), were not only generally known among the Christians, but were revered even as the Scriptures of the Old Testament, that is, as divine books. The late Bishop of London (Dr. Randolph) has satisfactorily vindicated the testimony of Justin against the charge by the translator of Michaelis, that this father had quoted what does not exist in sense or substance in any of our four Gospels. See his "Remarks on Michaelis's Introduction," &c. p. 78, *et seq.* second edition.

* See the references to the individual testimonies of these fathers in the Index to Dr. Lardner's Works, voce *Gospels*.

† See p. 448, *supra*.

‡ With regard to this supposed Greek title, we are in justice bound to remark, that Bishop Marsh has candidly left it to others to determine whether his conjecture is not rendered abortive by the want of the article before διηγησιν, (*narrative* or *declaration*) in Luke i. 1. On this topic Bishop Middleton is decisively of opinion that it is rendered totally abortive. With respect to the Greek article, he remarks, that "the rule is, that the title of a book, as prefixed to the book, should be *anarthrous*" (i. e. without the article); "but that when the book is referred to, the article should be inserted." And he adduces, among other instances, Hesiod's poem, entitled Ασπίς Ἡρακλέους (*Hercules's Shield*), which Longinus thus cites—εἰγεῖ Ἡσιόδου καὶ τὴν Ασπίδα θείαν. (if indeed THE shield may be ascribed to Hesiod). Bishop Middleton on the Greek Article, p. 289. In the two following pages he has controverted the translation of Luke i. 1—4, proposed by the translator of Michaelis.

to their document, but that occasionally some one (or more) of them gave a different representation of some fact, either from his own knowledge, or from information derived from another source (as the supposed document 2, &c.); this appears to sap the very foundation of the edifice; for in this case what becomes of the authority of the primary document? And, how can all three evangelists be said to have derived from it alone all the matter which they have in common? In whatever light, then, we view the subject, we cannot see how any modification of the general supposition, that the three evangelists, in the composition of their Gospels, used only one document, can satisfactorily explain all the examples of verbal disagreement which occur in the Gospels. We conclude, therefore, that no hypothesis which is built upon this foundation can be the true one. *

IV. The third hypothesis, which has been offered, to account for the verbal similarities, is that of a plurality of documents, proposed by Mr. Veysie, of which he gives the following description. †

“The apostles, both in their public preaching and in their private conversations, were doubtless accustomed frequently to instruct and improve their hearers by the recital of some action or discourse of our blessed Saviour. And many pious Christians, unwilling to trust to memory alone for the preservation of these valuable communications respecting their Redeemer, were induced to commit to writing the preaching of the apostles while it was fresh in their memory. And thus, at a very early period, before any of our canonical Gospels were written, believers were in possession of many narratives of detached parts of the history of Jesus—drawn up, some in the Hebrew language, and others in Greek. Of the Hebrew narratives, the most important were soon translated into Greek, for the benefit of the Greek Christians, to whom they were unintelligible in the original, and *vice versa*.”

From these detached narratives Mr. Veysie is of opinion, that the three first canonical Gospels were principally compiled. Of the authors of these Gospels, he thinks that as Saint Matthew alone was an eye-witness, he alone could write from personal knowledge of the facts which he recorded; and that even he did not judge it expedient to draw exclusively from his own stores, but blended with these detached narratives such additional facts and discourses as the Holy Spirit brought to his

* Veysie's Examination, p. 56.

† Ibid. p. 97.

remembrance. Saint Mark, our author further thinks, had no knowledge of Saint Matthew's Gospel; and having collected materials for a Gospel, he added to them numerous explanations that adapted them to the use of Gentile converts, together with various circumstances, the knowledge of which he probably acquired from Saint Peter. And he is of opinion also, that Saint Luke compiled his Gospel from similar detached narratives, many of which were the same as had been used by the other evangelists, though some of them had been drawn up by different persons, and perhaps from the preaching of other apostles; and that Saint Luke, being diligent in his inquiries and researches, was enabled to add greatly to the number. Saint Matthew, Mr. V. thinks, wrote in Hebrew, and the other two evangelists in Greek. "But Saint Mark being a plain unlettered man, and but meanly skilled in the Greek language, was for the most part satisfied with the very words of his Greek documents, and with giving a literal version of such as he translated from the Hebrew. Whereas Saint Luke, being a greater master of the Greek language, was more attentive to the diction, and frequently expressed the meaning of his documents in more pure words, and a more elegant form. Only he adhered more closely to the very expression of his documents, when he came to insert quotations from the Old Testament, or to recite discourses and conversations, and especially the discourses of our blessed Saviour. Both Saint Mark and Saint Luke adhered to the arrangement which they found in those documents which contained more facts than one. The documents themselves they arranged in chronological order. All the evangelists connected the documents one with another, each for himself and in his own way*." Our author also conjectures that Saint Matthew's Gospel was translated into Greek some time after the two other Gospels were in circulation; that the translator made great use of them, frequently copying their very words where they suited his purpose; that however, he made most use of Saint Mark's Gospel, having recourse to that of Saint Luke, only when he could derive no assistance from the other; and that where he had no doubt, or perceived no difficulty, he frequently translated for himself, without looking for assistance from either Saint Mark or Saint Luke.†

Such is the hypothesis proposed by Mr. Veysie in preference to that of the Bishop of Landaff. That it accounts for all the phenomena, which have, in Germany, been supposed to in-

* Veysie's Examination, pp. 98, 99.

† Ibid. pp. 100, 101.

volve so many difficulties, we have no inclination to controvert; for, as he observes of his lordship's hypothesis, "being framed by a man of genius and learning, principally with a view to explain the phenomena which the author had observed, it may reasonably be expected to answer, in every point of importance, the purpose for which it was intended." We are even ready to grant, that it answers this purpose more completely than that of Bishop Marsh, of which therefore it may be considered as an improvement; but to improve requires not the same effort of genius as to invent. Both, however, are mere hypotheses, or rather complications of various hypotheses, which he who rejects them cannot by argument or testimony be compelled to admit; while both appear to us to detract much from the authority which has hitherto been allowed to the first three Gospels.

To this author's detached narratives the same objections seem to lie which he has so forcibly urged against the very existence of Bishop Marsh's documents, and which have been already stated. Some of these narratives must have been of considerable length; for, some of the examples of verbal agreement, which they have occasioned between Saint Matthew and Saint Mark, are very long and remarkable. They must likewise have been deemed of great importance, since they were translated from Hebrew into Greek, for the benefit of the Greek Christians; and appear indeed, from this account of them, to have furnished the whole matter of Saint Mark's Gospel, except the explanation of some Jewish customs and names, and some circumstances acquired from Saint Peter. Such narratives as these are exactly Bishop Marsh's documents, and one of them, his document 8, an entire Gospel, of which not even the memory survived the apostolic age.*

V. Since, then, the three hypotheses, above discussed are insufficient to account for the harmony, both of words and of thought, which appear in the first three Gospels, should it be asked how are we to account for such coincidences? We reply that they may be sufficiently explained without having recourse to either of these hypotheses, and in a manner that cannot but satisfy every serious and inquiring reader.

"It is admitted on all hands," says Bishop Gleig, "that the most remarkable coincidences of both language and thought

* British Critic, vol. xxxiv. (O. S.) p. 114. An hypothesis similar to that of Mr. Veysie was started by a learned writer in the Eclectic Review, (vol. viii. part i. pp. 423, 424); but as it is liable to the same objections as Mr. V.'s, this brief notice of it may suffice.

that occur in the three first Gospels, are found in those places in which the several writers record our Lord's doctrines and miracles; and it will likewise be admitted, that of a variety of things seen or heard by any man at the same instant of time, those which made the deepest impression are distinctly remembered long after all traces of the others have been effaced from the memory. It will also be allowed, I think, that of a number of people witnessing the same remarkable event, some will be most forcibly impressed by one circumstance, and others by a circumstance which, though equally connected with the principal event, is considered by itself perfectly different. The miracles of our blessed Lord were events so astonishing, that they must have made, on the minds of all who witnessed them, impressions too deep to be ever effaced; though the circumstances attending each miracle must have affected the different spectators very differently, so as to have made impressions, some of them equally indelible with the miracle itself on the mind of one man; whilst by another, whose mind was completely occupied by the principal event itself, these very circumstances may have been hardly observed at all, and of course been soon forgotten.

“ That this is a matter of fact which occurs daily, every man may convince himself by trying to recollect all the particulars of an event which powerfully arrested his attention many years ago. He will find that his recollection of the event itself, and of many of the circumstances which attended it, is as vivid and distinct at this day as it was a month after the event occurred; whilst of many other circumstances, which he is satisfied must have accompanied it, he has but a very confused and indistinct recollection, and of some, no recollection at all. If the same man take the trouble to inquire of any friend who was present with him when he witnessed the event in question, he will probably find that his friend's recollection of the principal event is as vivid and distinct as his own; that his friend recollects likewise many of the accompanying circumstances which were either not observed by himself, or have now wholly escaped from his memory; and that of the minuter circumstances, of which he has the most distinct recollection, his friend remembers hardly one. That such is the nature of that intellectual power by which we retain the remembrance of past events, I know from experience; and if there be any man who has never yet made such experiments on himself, let him make them immediately, and I am under no apprehension, that if they be fairly made, the result will not be as I have always found it. Let it be remembered too, as an universal fact, or a law of

human nature as certainly as gravitation is a law of corporeal nature, that in proportion as the impression made on the mind by the *principal object* in any interesting scene is strong, those produced by the *less important circumstances* are weak, and therefore liable to be soon effaced, or if retained at all, retained faintly and confusedly; and that when the impression made by the principal object is exceedingly strong, so as to fill the mind completely, the unimportant circumstances make no impression whatever, as has been a hundred times proved by the hackneyed instance of a man absorbed in thought, not hearing the sound of a clock when striking the hour beside him. If these facts be admitted (and I cannot suppose that any reflecting man will call them in question), it will not, I think, be necessary to have recourse to *hypotheses*, to account either for that degree of harmony which prevails among the three first evangelists, when recording the *miracles* of our blessed Lord, or for the discrepancy which is found in what they say of the *order* in which those miracles were performed, or of *the less important circumstances* accompanying the performance. In every one of them the *principal object* was our Lord himself, whose powerful voice the winds and waves, and even the devils, obeyed. The power displayed by him on such occasions must have made so deep an impression on the minds of all the spectators as never to be effaced; but whether *one* or *two* demoniacs were restored to a sound mind in the land of the Gadarenes; whether *one* or *two* blind men miraculously received their sight in the neighbourhood of Jericho; and whether that miracle was performed at *one* end of the town or at the *other*, are circumstances which, when compared with the miracles themselves, are of so little importance, as may easily be supposed to have made but a slight impression on the minds of even some of the most attentive observers, whose whole attention had been directed to the principal object, and by whom these circumstances would be soon forgotten, or, if remembered at all, remembered confusedly. To the order of time in which the miracles were performed, the evangelists appear to have paid very little regard, but to have recorded them, as Boswell records many of the sayings of Johnson, without marking their dates; or as Xenophon has recorded the memorabilia of Socrates in a work which has been, in this respect, compared to the Gospels.”*

* Bishop Gleig's Stackhouse, vol. iii. p. 104.

With respect to the *doctrines* of our Lord, it should be recollected that the sacred historians are labouring to report with accuracy the speeches and discourses of another; in which case even common historians would endeavour to preserve the exact sense, and, as far as their memory would serve them, the same words. "In seeking to do this," says the late eminently learned Bishop of London, "it is not to be wondered at, that two or three writers should often fall upon verbal agreement; nor, on the contrary, if they write independently, that they should often miss of it, because their memory would often fail them. With regard to the sacred writers, *it is natural to suppose them studious of this very circumstance; and we have also reason to think, that they had assistance from above to the same effect*: and yet it is not necessary to suppose that either their natural faculty, or the extraordinary assistance vouchsafed them, or both, should have brought them to a perfect identity throughout; because it was not necessary for the purposes of Providence, and because it would have affected their character of original independent witnesses. Let me add, that these discourses, before they were committed to writing by the evangelists, must have been often repeated amongst the apostles in teaching others, and in calling them to remembrance among themselves. Saint Matthew had probably often heard and known how his fellow-labourers recollected the same discourses which he had selected for his own preaching and writing. We know not how much intercourse they had with each other, but probably a great deal before they finally dispersed themselves. Saint Mark and Saint Luke had the same opportunities, even if they were not original eye-witnesses. *I admit, then, of a common document; but that document was no other than the PREACHING OF OUR BLESSED LORD HIMSELF. He was the great prototype. In looking up to him, the author of their faith and mission, and to the very words in which he was wont to dictate to them (which not only yet sounded in their ears, but were also recalled by the aid of his Holy Spirit promised* for that very purpose), they have given us three Gospels, often agreeing in words, though not without much diversification, and always in sense.*"†

To this powerful reasoning we can add nothing: protracted as this discussion has unavoidably been, the importance of its

* John xiv. 26.

† "Remarks on Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament," pp. 32, *et seq.* See also Bishop Gleig's edition of Stackhouse, vol. iii. pp. 105—112.

subjects must be the author's apology for the length at which the preceding questions have been treated; because the admission of either the copying or documentary hypotheses is not only detrimental to the character of the sacred writers, but also diminishes the value and importance of their testimony, and further tends to sap the inspiration of the New Testament. "They seem to think more justly," said that eminent critic Le Clerc, "who say that the three first evangelists were unacquainted with each other's design: thus greater weight accrues to their testimony. When witnesses agree, who have previously concerted together, they are suspected; but those witnesses are justly credited who testify the same thing separately, and without knowing what others have said." *

* Phereponi (i. e. Johannis Le Clerc) Animadversiones in Augustin. de Consensu Evangeliorum, cited by Dr. Lardner, Works, 8vo, vol. v. p. 93; 4to, vol. ii. p. 584.

SECTION VI.

ON THE GOSPEL BY SAINT JOHN.

I. *Author*;—II. *Date*;—III. *Genuineness and authenticity of this Gospel*;—IV. *Its occasion and design*;—*Account of the tenets of Cerinthus*;—*Analysis of its Contents*;—V. *Saint John's Gospel, a supplement to the other three*;—VI. *Observations on its style.*

I. SAINT JOHN, the evangelist and apostle, was the son of Zebedee, a fisherman of the town of Bethsaida, on the sea of Galilee, and the younger brother of James the elder. His mother's name was Salome. Zebedee, though a fisherman, appears to have been in good circumstances: for the evangelical history informs us that he was the owner of a vessel, and had hired servants (Mark i. 27). And therefore we have no reason to imagine that his children were altogether *illiterate*, as some critics have imagined them to have been, from a misinterpretation of Acts iv. 13, where the terms *αγραμματοι* and *ιδιωται*, in our version rendered *unlearned* and *illiterate* men, simply denote persons in private stations of life, who were neither rabbis nor magistrates, and such as had not studied in the schools of the Pharisees, and consequently were ignorant of the rabbinical learning and traditions of the Jews. John and his brother James were, doubtless, well acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Testament,

having not only read them, but heard them publicly explained in the synagogues; and, in common with the other Jews, they entertained the expectation of the Messiah, and that his kingdom would be a temporal one. It is not impossible, though it cannot be affirmed with certainty, that Saint John had been a disciple of John the Baptist, before he became a disciple of Christ. At least, the circumstantial account, which he has given in ch. i. 37—41, of the two disciples who followed Christ, might induce us to suppose that he was one of the two. It is, however, certain that he had both seen and heard our Saviour, and had witnessed some of his miracles, particularly that performed at Cana in Galilee (ii. 1—11). Saint John has not recorded his own call to the apostleship; but we learn from the other three evangelists that it took place, when he and James were fishing upon the sea of Galilee*. And Saint Mark, in enumerating the twelve apostles (iii. 17), when he mentions James and John, says that our Lord “surnamed them Boanerges, which is sons of thunder,” from which appellation we are not to suppose that they were of particularly fierce and ungovernable tempers (as Dr. Cave has conjectured);† but, as Dr. Lardner and others have observed, it is rather to be considered as prophetically representing the resolution and courage with which they would openly and boldly declare the great truths of the Gospel, when fully acquainted with them. How appropriate this title was, the Acts of the Apostles and the writings of Saint John abundantly show‡. From the time when John and his brother received their immediate call from Christ, they became his constant attendants; they heard his discourses, and beheld his miracles; and, after previous instruction, both public and private, they were honoured with a selection and appointment to be of the number of the apostles.

What Saint John's age was at this time, his history does not precisely ascertain. Some have conjectured that he was then twenty-two years old; others that he was about twenty-five or twenty-six years of age; and others again think that he was about the age of our Saviour. Dr. Lardner is of opinion that

* Matt. iv. 21, 22. Mark i. 19, 20. Luke v. 1—10. Lampe has marked what he thinks are three degrees in the call of Saint John to be a follower of Christ, viz. 1. His call to the discipleship (John i. 37—42), after which he continued to follow his business for a short time; 2. His call to be one of the immediate companions of Christ (Matt. iv. 21, 22); and, 3. His call to the apostleship, when the surname of Boanerges was given to him and his brother. Lampe, *Comment. in Evangelium Johannis Prolegom.* cap. ii. pp. 17—21.

† Cave's *Life of Saint James the Great*, § 5. p. 142.

‡ Lampe, *ut supra*, pp. 21—30.

none of the apostles were much under the age of thirty, when they were appointed to that important office. Whatever his age might have been, John seems to have been the youngest of the twelve, and (if we may judge from his writings) to have possessed a temper singularly mild, amiable, and affectionate. He was eminently the object of our Lord's regard and confidence; and was, on various occasions, admitted to free and intimate intercourse with him, so that he was characterized as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John xiii. 23). Hence we find him present at several scenes, to which most of the other disciples were not admitted. He was an eye-witness, in company with only Peter and James, to the resurrection of Jairus's daughter to life, to our Saviour's transfiguration on the mount, and to his agony in the garden. Saint John repaid this attention by the most sincere attachment to his Master: for though, in common with the other apostles, he had betrayed a culpable timidity in forsaking him during his last conflict, yet he afterwards recovered his firmness, and was the only apostle who followed Christ to the place of his crucifixion. He was also present at the several appearances of our Saviour after his resurrection, and has given his testimony to the truth of that miraculous fact; and these circumstances, together with his intercourse with the mother of Christ (whom our Saviour had commended to his care), (xix. 26, 27), qualified him, better than any other writer, to give a circumstantial and authentic history of Jesus Christ.

In one of our Saviour's interviews with his apostles, after his resurrection, he prophetically told this evangelist, that he would survive the destruction of Jerusalem, and intimated, not obscurely, that Saint Peter would suffer crucifixion, but that he would die a natural death (xxi. 18—24). After the ascension of Christ, and the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Saint John became one of the chief apostles of the circumcision, and exercised his ministry at Jerusalem and its vicinity, in the manner and with the success related in the Acts of the Apostles*. He was present at the council held in that city (Acts xv.) about the year 49 or 50. Until this time he probably remained in Judea, and had not travelled into any foreign countries. From ecclesiastical history we learn, that after the death of Mary, the mother of Christ, Saint John proceeded to Asia Minor, where he founded and presided over seven churches in as many cities, but resided chiefly at Ephesus.

* See particularly Acts ii. 1—11. iii. iv. 1—22. and viii. 5—26.

Thence he was banished to the Isle of Patmos towards the close of Domitian's reign, where he wrote his Revelation (Rev. i. 9). On his liberation from exile, by the accession of Nerva to the imperial throne, Saint John returned to Ephesus, where he wrote his Gospel and Epistles, and died in the hundredth year of his age, about the year of Christ 100, and in the third year of the reign of the emperor Trajan. *

II. The precise time when this Gospel was written, has not been ascertained, though it is generally agreed that Saint John composed it at Ephesus. Basnage and Lampe suppose it to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem; and in conformity with their opinion Dr. Lardner fixes its date in the year 68; Dr. Owen in 69; Michaelis in 70. But Chrysostom and Epiphanius, among the antient fathers, and Dr. Mill, Fabricius, Le Clerc, and Bishop Tomline, among the moderns, refer its date, with greater probability, to the year 97. The principal argument for its early date is derived from John v. 2. where the apostle says, "*Now there is at Jerusalem, by the sheep market, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.*" From these words it is urged, that Jerusalem was standing when they were written; and that, if they had been written *after* the destruction of Jerusalem, the evangelist would have used the past tense instead of the present, and would have said, *There was at Jerusalem a pool, &c.* But this argument is more specious than forcible; for, though Jerusalem was demolished, it does not necessarily follow that the pool of Bethesda was dried up. On the contrary, there are much stronger reasons for supposing that it escaped the general devastation: for, when Vespasian ordered the city to be demolished, he permitted some things to remain for the use of the garrison which was to be stationed there †; and he would naturally leave this bathing-place, fitted up with recesses or porticoes for shade and shelter, that he might not deprive the soldiers of a grateful refreshment ‡. Now, since the evangelist's proposition may simply regard Bethesda, we cannot be certain that it looks further, or has any view to the state of Jerusalem. The argument therefore, which is deduced from the above passage in favour of an early date, is inconclusive.

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 156—170; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 212—220. Michaelis, vol. iii. part i. pp. 272—274. Lampe, Proleg. in Joan. Evangel. pp. 31—102.

† See Josephus de Bell. Jud. lib. vii. c. i. § 1.

‡ Dr. Townson's Works, vol. i. p. 224. This conjecture is confirmed by the fact that Vespasian soon after erected magnificent public baths at Rome. Suetonius in Vespasiano, c. vii.

But, besides this argument, we have strong evidence from the contents and design of the Gospel itself, that it was not written until the year 97. It is evident, as Bishop Tomline has forcibly remarked, “that the evangelist considers those to whom he addresses his Gospel as but little acquainted with Jewish customs and names: for he gives various explanations which would be unnecessary, if the persons for whom he wrote were conversant with the usages of the Jews*.” Similar explanations occur in the Gospels of Saint Mark and Saint Luke; but in this of Saint John they are more marked, and occur more frequently. The reason of which may be, that, when Saint John wrote, many more Gentiles, and of more distant countries, had been converted to Christianity; and it was now become necessary to explain to the Christian church, thus extended, many circumstances which needed no explanation, while its members belonged only to the neighbourhood of Judea, and while the Jewish polity was still in existence. It is reasonable to suppose that the feasts and other peculiarities of the Jews would be but little understood by the Gentiles of Asia Minor, thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem.†”

III. The Gospel by Saint John has been universally received as genuine. The circumstantiality of its details proves that the book was written by an eye-witness of the discourses and transactions it records. But, besides this incontestable internal evidence, we have the external and uninterrupted testimony of the antient fathers of the Christian church. His Gospel is alluded to, four times, by Ignatius Bishop of Antioch, who had been a disciple of the evangelist, and had conversed familiarly with several of the apostles§. It was also received by Justin Martyr||, Tatian, the churches of Vienne and Lyons**, Irenæus††, Athenagoras‡‡, Theophilus of Antioch§§, Clement of Alexandria|||, Tertullian***, Ammonius†††, Origen‡‡‡,

* See particularly John i. 38. 41. ii. 6. 13. iv. 9. and xi. 55.

† Elements of Christ. Theol. vol. i. p. 335.

‡ See the passages in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 72, 73; 4to, vol. i. pp. 317, 318.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 120, 121; 4to, vol. ii. p. 344.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 139; 4to, vol. i. p. 355.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 150; 4to, vol. i. p. 361.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 161; 4to, vol. i. p. 367.

‡‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 183; 4to, vol. i. p. 379.

§§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 193; 4to, vol. i. p. 384.

||| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 212, 220; 4to, vol. i. pp. 395. 399.

*** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 256; 4to, vol. i. p. 419.

††† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 414—417; 4to, vol. i. pp. 503—505.

‡‡‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 469, 470; 4to, vol. i. pp. 533, 534.

Eusebius *, Epiphanius, Augustine, Chrysostom, and in short by all subsequent writers of the antient Christian church †. The Alogi or Alogians, a sect which is *said* to have existed in the second century, are reported to have rejected this Gospel, as well as the rest of Saint John's writings; but we have no information concerning these Alogi, on which any dependence can be placed: for, in strictness, we have no account of them except the later and uncertain accounts of Philaster and Epiphanius; Irenæus, Eusebius, and other antient writers before them, being totally silent concerning the Alogi. The probability therefore is, that there never was any such heresy ‡.

With such decisive testimonies to the genuineness of Saint John's Gospel, it is not a little surprising, that so distinguished a critic as Grotius should have imagined that the evangelist terminated his history of our Saviour with the twentieth chapter, and that the twenty-first chapter was added after his death by the church at Ephesus. But this opinion is contradicted by the universal consent of manuscripts and versions. for, as this Gospel was published before the evangelist's death, if there had been an edition of it without the twenty-first chapter, it would in all probability have been wanting in some copies. To which we may add, that the genuineness of the chapter in question was never doubted by any one of the antient Christian writers. Finally, the style is precisely the same as that of the rest of his Gospel.

IV. The general design of Saint John, in common with the rest of the evangelists, is, as he himself assures us, to prove that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that believing we may have life through his name (xx. 31). But, besides this, we are informed by Irenæus, and other antient writers, that there were two especial motives that induced Saint John to compose his Gospel. One was, that he might refute the heresies of Cerinthus and the Nicolaitans, who had attempted to corrupt the Christian doctrine; the other motive was, that he might supply those important events in our Saviour's life, which the other evangelists had omitted. Respecting the former of these motives, Irenæus gives us the following account ||.

* Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. iv. pp. 225—227; 4to, vol. ii. pp. 368, 369.

† See their several testimonies in Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 187—190; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 227, 228.

‡ Ibid. vol. ix. pp. 515, 516; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 690, 691.

§ Ibid. vol. vi. p. 222; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 244, 245.

|| Irenæus advers. Hæres, lib. iii. c. xi.

“ John being desirous to extirpate the errors sown in the minds of men by Cerinthus, and some time before by those called Nicolaitans, published his Gospel; in which he acquaints us that there is one God, who made all things by his word; and not, as they say, one who is the Creator of the world, and another who is the Father of the Lord; one the Son of the Creator, and another the Christ from the super-celestial abodes, who descended upon Jesus the Son of the Creator, but remained impassible, and afterwards fled back to his own pleroma or fulness.”

This testimony of Irenæus has been opposed by Lampe, Lardner, Tittmann, Kuinöel, and others, and adopted by Buddeus, Michaelis, Moldenhawer, Mosheim, Bishop Tomline, Dr. Owen, and other later divines. The principal objections against the declaration of Irenæus may be reduced to the two following, viz.

1. That Irenæus is at variance with himself: for in another passage he says, “ as John the disciple of our Lord assures us, saying, ‘ But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name;’ *foreseeing* these blasphemous notions that divide the Lord, so far as it is in their power *.” Now, if Irenæus here meant to say, that Saint John only *foresaw* the errors, which were propagated by Cerinthus and the Gnostics, it must appear very extraordinary that he should say, in the passage above quoted, that Saint John wrote against the errors which had been propagated by Cerinthus. But the contradiction is only apparent: for *providens*, the expression of Irenæus, does not signify ‘ *foreseeing*,’ but *guarding against*. The latter passage therefore, when properly explained, does not confute but confirm the former. Besides, as Saint Paul in his first epistle to Timothy speaks of Gnostic errors, it is evident that they must have been propagated long before Saint John wrote his Gospel.

The second argument, relied upon by those learned men who dissent from the common opinion, is, that the early fathers in their catalogues of heretics, for the most part place Cerinthus after Carpocrates, who unquestionably lived and taught

* Quemadmodum Joannes Domini discipulus confirmat, dicens, “ Hæc autem scripta sunt, ut credatis quoniam Jesus est filius Dei, et ut credentes, vitam æternam habeatis in nomine ejus;” *providens* has blasphemias regulas, quæ dividunt Dominum, quantum ex ipsis attinet. Advers. Hæres, lib. iii. c. 16.

in the second century. This circumstance would certainly possess considerable weight, if it appeared that the early fathers had paid due attention to the regular order of time in their enumeration of heretics: but, instead of this, we know the fact to be, that the names of heretics are set down by Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement, and others, at random, and without paying any regard to the times in which they lived.

“But even if Irenæus had not asserted that Saint John wrote his Gospel against the Gnostics, and particularly against Cerinthus, the contents of the Gospel itself would lead to this conclusion. The speeches of Christ, which Saint John has recorded, are selected with a totally different view, from that of the three first evangelists, who have given such as are of a moral nature, whereas those which are given by Saint John are chiefly dogmatical, and relate to Christ’s divinity, the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, the supernatural assistance to be communicated to the apostles, and other subjects of a like import. In the very choice of his expressions, such as light, life, &c. he had in view the philosophy of the Gnostics, who used, or rather abused these terms. That the fourteen first verses of Saint John’s Gospel are merely historical, and contain only a short account of Christ’s history before his appearance on earth, is a supposition devoid of all probability. On the contrary it is evident that they are purely doctrinal, and that they were introduced with a polemical view, in order to confute errors, which prevailed at that time respecting the person of Jesus Christ. Unless Saint John had an adversary to combat, who made particular use of the words ‘light,’ and ‘life,’ he would not have thought it necessary, after having described the Creator of all things, to add, that in him was life, and the life was the light of men, or to assert that John the Baptist was not that light. The very meaning of the word ‘light’ would be extremely dubious, unless it were determined by its particular application in the oriental Gnosis. For without the supposition, that Saint John had to combat with an adversary who used this word in a particular sense, it might be applied to any divine instructor, who by his doctrines enlightened mankind. Further, the positions contained in the fourteen first verses are antitheses to positions maintained by the Gnostics, who used the words *λογος, ζωη, φως, μονογενης, πληρωμα,* &c. as technical terms of their philosophy. Lastly, the speeches of Christ, which Saint John has selected, are such as confirm the positions laid down in the first chapter of his Gospel: and therefore we must conclude that his principal object through-

out the whole of his Gospel was to confute the errors of the Gnostics" *.

In addition to the preceding arguments and proofs, there is one circumstance highly worthy of remark, which greatly strengthens the testimony of Irenæus as to the object of Saint John in writing his Gospel; viz. that he delivered it within a century after that Gospel was written. Now, as Irenæus was a disciple of Polycarp who was personally acquainted with the evangelist, he consequently had the best means of procuring information on this subject. The evidence of a credible writer of the second century, uncontradicted by contemporary writers, or by those who lived in the following century, is surely preferable to the conjectures offered by critics of the eighteenth century †. In order to understand the design and arrangement of Saint John's Gospel, it will be necessary to take a brief review of the tenets of Cerinthus in opposition to which the evangelist purposely wrote it. This will not only reflect considerable light on particular passages, but make the whole appear a complete work—regular, clear, and conclusive.

Cerinthus was by birth a Jew who lived at the close of the first century: having studied literature and philosophy at Alexandria, he attempted at length to form a new and singular system of doctrine and discipline, by a monstrous combination of the doctrines of Jesus Christ with the opinions and errors of the Jews and Gnostics. From the latter he borrowed their *Plerōma* or fulness, their *Æons* or spirits, their *Demiurgus* or creator of the visible world, &c. and so modified and tempered these fictions as to give them an air of Judaism, which must have considerably favoured the progress of his heresy. He taught that the most high God was utterly unknown before the appearance of Christ, and dwelt in a remote heaven called *Plerōma* with the chief spirits or *Æons*;—That this supreme God first generated an *only begotten* SON, who again begat the WORD, which was inferior to the first-born—That CHRIST was a still lower æon, though far superior to some others—That there were two higher æons, distinct from Christ; one called LIFE, and the other LIGHT—That from the æons again proceeded inferior orders of spirits, and particularly one *Demiurgus*,

* Michaelis, vol. iii. part i. p. 280.

† Lampe, Prolegom. in Johannis Evangelium, vol. i. p. 179, *et seq.* Buddeus de Ecclesia Apostolica, p. 412, *et seq.* Mosheim's Commentaries on the Affairs of Christians, vol. i. pp. 337, 338, *note.* Michaelis, vol. iii. part i. pp. 278, 279. Titmanni, Meletemata Sacra in Evangelium Johannis, pp. 14—24. Kuinöel, Comment. in Hist. Libros Nov. Test. vol. iii. pp. 42, *et seq.*

who created this visible world out of eternal matter—That this Demiurgus was ignorant of the supreme God, and much lower than the *Æons*, which were wholly invisible—That he was, however, the peculiar God and protector of the Israelites, and sent Moses to them; whose laws were to be of perpetual obligation—That Jesus was a mere man of the most illustrious sanctity and justice, the real son of Joseph and Mary—That the *Æon* Christ descended upon him in the form of a dove when he was baptized, revealed to him the unknown Father, and empowered him to work miracles—That the *Æon* LIGHT entered John the Baptist in the same manner, and therefore that John was in some respects preferable to Christ—That Jesus, after his union with Christ, opposed himself with vigour to the God of the Jews, at whose instigation he was seized and crucified by the Hebrew chiefs, and that when Jesus was taken captive and came to suffer, Christ ascended upon high, so that the man Jesus alone was subjected to the pains of an ignominious death; that Christ will one day return upon earth, and, renewing his former union with the man Jesus, will reign in Palestine a thousand years, during which his disciples will enjoy the most exquisite sensual delights*.

Bearing these dogmas in mind, we shall find that Saint John's Gospel is divided into three parts, viz.

PART I. contains doctrines laid down in opposition to those of Cerinthus (John i. 1—18).

PART II. delivers the proofs of those doctrines in an historical manner (i. 19—xx. 29).

PART III. is a conclusion or appendix giving an account of the person of the writer, and of his design in writing his Gospel (xx. 30, 31. xxi).

Besides refuting the errors of Cerinthus and his followers, Michaelis is of opinion that Saint John also had in view to confute the erroneous tenets of the Sabeans, a sect which acknowledged John the Baptist for its founder. He has adduced a variety of terms and phrases, which he has applied to the explanation of the first fourteen verses of Saint John's Gospel, in such a manner as renders his conjecture not improbable†. Perhaps we shall not greatly err if we conclude with Rosenmüller, that Saint John had both these classes of heretics in view, and that he wrote to confute their respective tenets. Yet, though he composed his Gospel principally with this design, he

* Mosheim's Commentaries, vol. i. pp. 337—347. Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ix. pp. 325—327; 4to, vol. iv. pp. 567—569.

† Michaelis, vol. iii. pp. 285—302.

did not wholly confine himself to it; but took occasion to impart correct views of the nature and offices of Jesus Christ, to both Jews and Gentiles. Should this opinion be acceded to, it will reconcile the various opinions of learned men, concerning the real scope of Saint John's Gospel.

V. It is obvious to every attentive reader of this Gospel, that Saint John studiously omits to notice those passages in our Lord's history and teaching, which had been related at length by the other evangelists, or if he mentions them at all, it is in a very cursory manner. By pursuing this method he gives his testimony that their narratives are faithful and true, and at the same time leaves himself room to enlarge the Gospel history. This confirms the unanimous declarations of antient writers, that the first three Gospels were written and published before Saint John composed his evangelical history. In the account of our Saviour's passion, death, and resurrection, all the four Gospels coincide in many particulars; though here Saint John has several things peculiar to himself. In his Gospel, many things recorded by the other evangelists are omitted. He has given no account of our Saviour's nativity, nor of his baptism by John. He takes no notice of our Saviour's temptation in the wilderness; nor of the call or names of the twelve apostles; nor of their mission during the ministry of Christ; nor of his parables, or other discourses recorded by the first three evangelists; nor of his journeys; nor of any of his predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, which are related by them; nor has Saint John repeated any of Christ's miracles recorded by them, except that of feeding five thousand people, which was probably repeated for the sake of the discourse to which it gave birth. But, on the other hand, Saint John mentions several incidents, which the other evangelists have not noticed. Thus, he gives an account of our Lord's cleansing the temple at the *first* passover, when he went to Jerusalem; but all the other evangelists give a similar account of his cleansing the temple at his *last* passover. These two acts, however, are widely different. He relates the acts of Christ before the imprisonment of John the Baptist; the wedding at Cana; the cure of the man who had been blind from his birth; the resurrection of Lazarus; the indignation of Judas against the woman who anointed our Lord with ointment; the visit of the Greeks to Jesus; his washing the feet of his disciples; and his consolatory discourse to them previously to his passion. Saint John's Gospel also contains more plain and frequent assurances than those occurring in the other Gospels, that Jesus is not only a prophet and messenger of God, but also that he

is the Messiah, the Son of God; and asserts his pre-existence and Deity in the clearest and most distinct terms. *

VI. Salmasius, Grotius, Bolten, and other critics have imagined that Saint John did not write his Gospel originally in Greek, but in the Syriac language. This hypothesis however is contradicted by the unanimous consent of Christian antiquity, which affirms that he wrote it in Greek. In addition to the observations already offered, respecting the original language of the New Testament †, we may remark, that the Hebraisms occurring in this Gospel clearly prove that it was originally written by a Jew. His style is pronounced by Michaelis ‡ to be better and more fluent than that of the other evangelists; and he ascribes this excellence to the facility and taste in the Greek language, which the apostle seems to have acquired from his long residence at Ephesus. His narrative is characterized by singular perspicuity, and by the most unaffected simplicity and benevolence. There are few passages in Holy Writ more deeply affecting than this evangelist's narrative of the resurrection of Lazarus §.

* Michaelis, vol. iii. pp. 303—315.

† See Vol. I. pp. 238—240, *supra*.

‡ Vol. iii. part i. p. 316.

§ Campbell on the Gospels, vol. ii. pp. 192—195. Kuinöel, Comm. in Hist. Lib. Nov. Test. vol. iii. pp. 33, *et seq.* Pritii, Introd. ad Nov. Test. pp. 203—226. Viser, Herm. Sacr. Nov. Test. pars i. p. 340. pars ii. pp. 265—268.

SECTION VII.

ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

I. *Title*; — II. *Author*; — III. *Genuineness and authenticity*; — IV. *Scope*; — V. *Chronology*; — VI. *Analysis of the contents of this Book*; — VII. *Observations on its style*; — VIII. *On the importance of this Book, as an evidence for the truth of Christianity.*

1. THE Book of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES forms the fifth and last of the historical books of the New Testament, and connects the Gospels with the Epistles; being an useful post-script to the former, and a proper introduction to the latter. On this account it has been generally placed after the four Gospels, though (as Michaelis has remarked) in several antient manuscripts and versions it is very frequently placed after the Epistles of Saint Paul, because it is necessary to the right understanding of them. Various titles have been given to this

book, which are noticed in the critical editions of the New Testament. Thus, in the Codex Bezae, or Cambridge manuscript, it is called Πραξεις των Αποστολων, the Acts or Transactions of the Apostles. In the Codex Alexandrinus, and many other manuscripts, it is entitled Πραξεις των αγιων αποστολων, *the Acts of the Holy Apostles*, which title is also adopted by most of the Greek and Latin fathers. The first of these various titles is that which is adopted in the printed editions, and in all modern versions; but by whom it was prefixed, it is now impossible to ascertain. This book contains great part of the lives and transactions of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and of the history of the Christian church; commencing at the ascension of our Saviour, and being continued down to Saint Paul's arrival at Rome, after his appeal to Cæsar, comprizing a period of about thirty years.

II. That Saint Luke was the author of the Acts of the Apostles, is evident both from the introduction, and from the unanimous testimonies of the early Christians. Both are inscribed to Theophilus; and in the very first verse of the Acts there is a reference made to his Gospel, which he calls "*the former Treatise.*" On this account Dr. Benson and some other critics have conjectured that Saint Luke wrote the Gospels and Acts in one book, and divided it into two parts. From the frequent use of the first person plural, it is clear that he was present at most of the transactions he relates. He appears to have accompanied Saint Paul from Troas to Philippi; he also attended him to Jerusalem, and afterwards to Rome, where he remained two years, during that apostle's first confinement. Accordingly we find Saint Luke particularly mentioned in two of the Epistles written by Saint Paul, from Rome, during that confinement*. And as the book of Acts is continued to the end of the second year of Saint Paul's imprisonment, it could not have been written before the year 63; and, as the death of that apostle is not mentioned, it is probable that the book was composed before that event, which is supposed to have happened A. D. 65. For these reasons, Michaelis, Dr. Lardner, Dr. Benson, Rosenmüller, Bishop Tomline, and the generality of critics, assign the date of this book to the year 63.

III. To the genuineness and authenticity of this book, the early Christian fathers bear unanimous testimony. Not to

* Col. iv. 14. Philem. 24.

mention the attestations of the apostolic fathers, in the first century, which have been collected by Drs. Benson and Lardner*, we may remark that Irenæus† and Tertullian‡, in the second century, both ascribed the Acts of the Apostles to Saint Luke. And their evidence is corroborated by that of Origen, Jerome, Augustine, Eusebius, and all subsequent ecclesiastical writers§. Further, Chrysostom and other fathers inform us, that this book was annually read in the churches, every day between the festivals of Easter and Pentecost, or Whitsuntide||. The Valentinians, indeed, as well as the Marcionites, Severians, and some Manicheans, rejected the Acts of the Apostles, not from historical reasons, but because they militated against their opinions: for the Gnostics (of which sect the Valentinians and Marcionites were a branch) affirmed that the God of the Old Testament was different from the God of the New Testament; and that another Christ, different from our Saviour, was promised. The Severians and Encratites strenuously insisted upon abstinence from certain articles of food; whereas, in the book of Acts, the promiscuous use of food is allowed. Lastly, Manes wished himself to be taken for “the Comforter,” who had been promised by Christ to his apostles: but in the Acts it is related that the Comforter that had been so promised was the Holy Spirit, who had been sent. The reasons, therefore, why the book was rejected by the above-mentioned sects, were not historical, but doctrinal; because the narrative of the sacred historian contradicted their dogmas; and as their errors were detected and refuted by contemporary writers**, the unqualified and unsupported assertions of these heretics are so far from impugning the veracity and genuineness of the Acts of the Apostles, that, on the contrary, they afford a decisive and collateral testimony in favour of the book.

IV. Saint Luke does not appear to have intended to write a complete ecclesiastical history of the Christian church, during the first thirty years after our Saviour’s ascension, nor even of

* Dr. Benson’s Hist. of the First Planting of Christianity, vol. ii. pp. 325—330. 2d edit. Dr. Lardner’s Works, Index, voce *Acts of the Apostles*.

† Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 162, 163; 4to, vol. i. p. 368. Benson, vol. ii. p. 330.

‡ Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 261, 262; 4to, vol. i. p. 452. Benson, vol. ii. p. 331.

§ Benson, vol. ii. pp. 321—324. Lardner, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 145—147; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 206, 207.

|| Benson, vol. ii. p. 332. Lardner, 8vo, vol. v. pp. 133, 134; 4to, vol. ii. p. 605.

** Irenæus adversus Hæreses, lib. iii. c. 12. Theodoret, Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 21. Augustine, epist. 251, et contra Faustum, lib. xix. c. 31.

Saint Paul's life during that period; for he has almost wholly omitted what passed among the Jews after the conversion of that apostle, and is totally silent concerning the spread of Christianity in the East and in Egypt, as well as the foundation of the church of Christ at Rome, Saint Paul's journey into Arabia, and many other topics, though the labours and sufferings of the other apostles could not but have afforded the most interesting materials, had it fallen within his design to have composed an entire history of the church.

If we carefully examine the Acts of the Apostles, we shall perceive that Saint Luke had two objects in view:—1. To relate in what manner the gifts of the Holy Spirit were communicated on the day of Pentecost, and the subsequent miracles performed by the apostles, by which the truth of Christianity was confirmed. An authentic account of this matter was absolutely necessary, because Christ had so often assured his disciples, that they should receive the Holy Spirit. Unbelievers therefore, whether Jews or Heathens, might have made objections to our religion, if it had not been shown that Christ's declaration was really fulfilled.—2. To deliver such accounts as proved the claim of the Gentiles to admission into the church of Christ—a claim disputed by the Jews, especially at the time when Saint Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles. And it was this very circumstance which excited the hatred of the Jews against Saint Paul, and occasioned his imprisonment in Rome, with which Saint Luke closes his history. Hence we see the reason why he relates (ch. viii.) the conversion of the Samaritans, and (ch. x. xi.) the story of Cornelius, whom Saint Peter (to whose authority the adversaries of Saint Paul had appealed in favour of circumcision *) baptized, though he was not of the circumcision. Hence also Saint Luke relates the determination of the first council in Jerusalem relative to the Levitical law: and for the same reason he is more diffuse in his account of Saint Paul's conversion, and Saint Paul's preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, than on any other subject. It is true that the whole relation, which Saint Luke has given (ch. xii.) has no connexion with the conversion of the Gentiles: but during the period, to which that chapter relates, Saint Paul himself was present at Jerusalem (see Acts xi. 30. xii. 25), and it is probable, for that reason, that Saint Luke has introduced it. But there is, 3. A third opinion, which Michaelis thinks not devoid of probability, viz. that Saint Luke might design to record only

* See Galat. ii. 6—21.

those facts, which he had either seen himself, or had heard from eye-witnesses *.

V. The Acts of the Apostles, Michaelis observes, were evidently written with a tolerably strict attention to chronological order; though Saint Luke has not affixed a date to any one of the facts recorded by him. There are, however, several parts of this book, in which ecclesiastical history is combined with political facts, the dates of which are known: and these Michaelis has endeavoured to determine, because the chronology will not only contribute to illustrate the Acts of the Apostles, but also will assist us in fixing the year when many of Saint Paul's Epistles were written. Taking for granted, therefore, that this book commences with the year 33 of the Christian æra (in which calculation he follows Archbishop Usher), he has given us the following series of dates.

1. "The *first epoch*, after the commencement of the book, is at ch. xi. 29, 30; for what happened between the first Pentecost after Christ's ascension and this period, is without any marks of chronology. But at ch. xi. 29, 30. we have a date: for the famine which took place in the time of Claudius Cæsar, and which induced the disciples at Antioch to send relief to their brethren in Judea, happened in the fourth year of Claudius's reign, that is, in the year 44 of the Christian æra.

2. *Second epoch*. Herod Agrippa dies soon after he had put to death the apostle Saint James: and about that time Saint Paul and Saint Barnabas return from Jerusalem to Antioch (ch. xii. 21—25). This is still in the year 44.

3. *Third epoch*. (Ch. xviii. 2.) Shortly after the banishment of the Jews from Italy by Claudius Cæsar, Saint Paul arrives at Corinth. Commentators affix the date 54 to this event; but it is uncertain, for Suetonius, the only historian who has noticed this banishment of the Jews, mentions it without date.

* Michaelis, vol. iii. part i. pp. 327—331. Dr. Benson, however, is of opinion that Saint Luke designed his book to be only a concise specimen of the doctrines preached by the apostles, and that he was chiefly desirous of describing the manner in which the Jews, proselytes of the gate, or devout Gentiles, and the idolatrous Gentiles, were respectively converted. Hence this learned author divides the book into three parts or books, viz. 1. The *first* part contains an account of the propagation of the Gospel among the Jews only, from A. D. 33 to A. D. 41, including chapters ii. to x. 2. The *second* comprizes an account of the spreading of Christianity among the devout Gentiles, together with its farther progress among the Jews, A. D. 41 to A. D. 44 (Acts x—xiii). 3. And the *third* part comprehends the diffusion of Christianity among the idolatrous Gentiles, together with its farther progress among the two preceding classes of persons, A. D. 44 to A. D. 63 (Acts xiii—xxviii). Benson's Hist. of the First Planting of Christianity, vol. i. pp. 22—24.

4. *Fourth epoch.* Saint Paul comes to Jerusalem, where he is imprisoned by the Jews, not long after the disturbances which were excited by the Egyptian. (Ch. xxi. 37—39). This imprisonment of Saint Paul happened in the year 60, for it was two years before Felix quitted his government of Judea. (Ch. xxiii. 26. xxiv. 27).

5. *Fifth epoch.* Two years after the commencement of Saint Paul's imprisonment, Festus is appointed Governor of Judea. A. D. 62. (Ch. xxiv. 27. xxv. 1).

From this period the chronology of the Acts of the Apostles is clear. Saint Paul is sent prisoner to Rome in the autumn of the same year in which Festus arrived in Judea: he suffers shipwreck, passes the winter in Malta, and arrives in Rome in the following year, that is, in 63. (Ch. xxvi. xxvii. xxviii).

The Acts of the Apostles close with the end of the second year of Saint Paul's imprisonment in Rome: consequently, in the year 65. (Ch. xxviii. 30)."

It is difficult to determine the date of the events that happened between the epochs 33 and 34, and between 44 and 60, especially the time of Saint Paul's conversion and of the council at Jerusalem: Archbishop Usher places the first of these transactions A. D. 35, others in 38. But, though we cannot attain to absolute certainty, a probable conjecture may be formed. Thus, Michaelis remarks, Saint Stephen hardly suffered martyrdom before Pilate was recalled from the government of Judea; because (as we have already seen *), under that procurator, the Jews had not the power of inflicting capital punishments. Now, according to Usher, the year in which Pilate was recalled, was the thirty-sixth of the Christian æra. Saint Stephen's martyrdom therefore probably happened after 36. If this be true, Saint Paul's conversion must have happened likewise after 36, and therefore 35 is too early a date. But how long after 36, whether in 38, cannot be determined.

In what manner the chapters iii. iv. v. vi. are to be arranged between 33 and 36, Michaelis cannot determine: for what chronologers have said is here conjecture, and not calculation. The same uncertainty prevails in respect to ch. viii. and x.: for we can affirm nothing more, than that the one must be placed before the other, after 36. We are likewise in the dark with respect to ch. xiii. xiv. and several other chapters. Of ch. xvi. we may assert, that it belongs to a period at least six years prior to the fourth epoch, or the year 60: for a year and an half at Corinth, three years at Ephesus, and the time

* See Vol. I. pp. 74, 75, of this work.

spent on several journeys, can hardly be pressed into a smaller compass, than that of six years. To ch. xvi., therefore, the latest date which can be assigned is 54: and it is not improbable that it should be dated still earlier*.

VI. The Acts of the Apostles may be divided into three principal parts, viz.

PART 1. contains the rise and progress of the mother church at Jerusalem from the time of our Saviour's ascension to the first Jewish persecution (ch. i—viii).

SECTION 1. The transactions before and after Jesus Christ's ascension into Heaven (i).

SECTION ii. The descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at the feast of Pentecost, and Peter's discourse to the people in consequence of it (ii).

SECTION iii. A lame man healed by Peter and John—Peter's discourse to the people—Events that befel the apostles in consequence of that miracle (iii. iv).

SECTION iv. The death of Ananias and Sapphira—Miracles of the apostles—who are scourged and dismissed (v).

SECTION v. The institution of deacons—the discourse and martyrdom of Stephen—and the first Jewish persecution (vi. vii. viii. 1—4).

PART 2. comprizes the dispersion of the disciples—the propagation of Christianity among the Samaritans—the conversion of Saint Paul, and the foundation of a Christian church at Antioch (viii. 5—xii).

SECTION 1. The planting of the church at Samaria (viii. 15—25).

SECTION ii. The conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch (viii. 26—40).

SECTION iii. The conversion, baptism, and first preaching of Saint Paul (ix).

SECTION iv. Account of two miracles performed by Peter, and the conversion of Cornelius and his family (x. xi. 1—18).

SECTION v. The first Gentile church founded at Antioch (xi. 19—30).

SECTION vi. The apostle James put to death by Herod Agrippa—relation of his miserable death (xii).

PART 3. describes the conversion of the more remote Gentiles, by Barnabas and Paul, and, after their separation, by Paul and his associates, among whom was Luke himself during the latter part of Paul's labours.

* Michaelis, vol. iii. part i. pp. 336—338.

SECTION i. The planting of several churches in the isle of Cyprus, at Perga in Pamphylia, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe—The return of Saint Paul to Antioch (xiii. xiv).

SECTION ii. Discussion of the question by the apostles at Jerusalem, concerning the necessity of circumcision and of observing the law—Their letter to the churches on this subject (xv. 1—35).

SECT. iii. Paul's second departure from Antioch — He preaches the Gospel in various countries, particularly Philippi in Macedonia—The conversion of the Philippian gaoler (xv. 36—40. xvi).

SECT. iv. The journeys and apostolical labours of Paul and his associates at Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens—His masterly apology before the court of the Areopagites (xvii).

SECT. 5. Paul's journey to Corinth, and thence to Antioch (xviii. 1—22).

SECT. vi. Paul's third departure from Antioch — Consequences of his preaching at Ephesus (xviii. 23—28. xix).

SECT. vii. The labours of Paul in Greece and Asia Minor, and his journey to Jerusalem (xx).

SECT. viii. The persecution of Paul at Jerusalem—He is sent a prisoner to Cæsarea (xxi—xxiii. 1—30).

SECT. ix. Paul's arrival at Cæsarea—The charges of the Jews against him—His defence before Felix—Appeal to Cæsar—His defence before Agrippa, at whose request his cause was reheard (xxiii. 31—35. xxiv—xxvi).

SECT. x. Narrative of Paul's voyage from Cæsarea—His shipwreck on the isle of Malta—His voyage thence to Rome, where he preaches the Gospel to the Jews, and resides for two years (xxvii. xxviii).

In perusing the Acts of the Apostles, it will be desirable constantly to refer to the accompanying map of their respective journeys, particularly those of Saint Paul. In constructing this map, the accurate geographer D'Anville has principally been followed; the courses of the several winds that usually blow in the Levant or Mediterranean sea, together with their antient names, are inserted from Dr. Shaw*.

VII. The narrative of the Acts of the Apostles is perspicuous and noble. Though it is not entirely free from Hebraisms, it is in general much purer than that of most other books of the New Testament, particularly in the speeches delivered by Saint

* Travels in Barbary, vol. ii. p. 131. 3d edit.

Paul at Athens, and before the Roman governors. It is further worthy of remark, that Saint Luke has well supported the character of each person whom he has introduced as speaking. Thus the speeches and discourses of Saint Peter are recorded with simplicity, and are destitute of all those ornaments which usually occur in the orations of the Greeks and Romans. Nearly similar are the speeches of Saint Paul, which were addressed to the Jews, while those delivered by the same apostle before an heathen audience are widely different. Thus, in his discourse delivered at Antioch in Pisidia*, he commences with a long periphrasis, which would not have been either instructive or entertaining in any other place than a Jewish synagogue. On the contrary, the speech of the martyr Stephen (Acts vii.) is altogether of a different description. It is a learned but unpremeditated discourse, pronounced by a person totally unacquainted with the art of oratory; and though he certainly had a particular object in view, to which the several parts of his discourse were directed, yet it is difficult to discover this object, because his materials are not regularly disposed. Lastly, Saint Paul's discourses before assemblies that were accustomed to Grecian oratory, are totally different from any of the preceding. Though not adorned with the flowers of rhetoric, the language is pointed and energetic, and the materials are judiciously selected and arranged, as is manifest in his speech delivered at Athens (Acts xvii. 22—31), and in his two defences of himself before the Roman governors of Judea (xxiv. xxvi). Dr. Benson and Michaelis, however, are both of opinion that Saint Luke has given abstracts only, and not the whole, of Saint Paul's speeches; for, in his speech before Felix, he must certainly have said more than is recorded by Saint Luke (xxiv. 12—13); unless we suppose that Saint Paul merely denied the charge which had been laid against him, without confuting it. Michaelis adds, that, in his opinion, Saint Luke has shown great judgment in these abstracts; and that, if he has not retained the very words of Saint Paul, he has adopted such as were well suited to the polished audiences before which the apostle spoke†.

VIII. The Acts of the Apostles afford abundant evidence of the truth and divine original of the Christian religion; for we learn from this book, that the Gospel was not indebted for its success to deceit or frauds, but it was wholly the result of the

* Acts xiii. 16—41.

† Michaelis, vol. iii. part i. pp. 331—335. Benson's History of the First Planting of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 258.

mighty power of God, and the excellence and efficacy of the saving truths which it contains. The general and particular doctrines, comprized in the Acts of the Apostles, are perfectly in unison with the glorious truths revealed in the Gospels, and illustrated in the apostolic Epistles; and are admirably suited to the state of the persons, whether Jews or Gentiles, to whom they were addressed. And the evidences which the apostles gave of their doctrine, in their appeals to prophecies and miracles, and the various gifts of the Spirit, were so numerous and so strong, and at the same time so widely adapted to every class of persons, that the truth of the religion, which they attest, cannot be reasonably disputed.

Further, the history itself is credible. It was written by a person who was acquainted with the various circumstances which he relates, and who was both able and disposed to give a faithful narrative of every thing that occurred. Saint Luke was a companion of the apostles; he was himself an eye and ear witness of the facts, and was personally concerned in many of the incidents he has recorded. In the history itself there are no inconsistencies or contradictions; the miraculous facts related in it are neither impossible, when we consider the almighty power of God to which they are ascribed, nor improbable, when we consider the grand design and occasion on account of which they were performed.

The plainness and simplicity of the narrative are also strong circumstances in its favour. The writer appears to have been very honest and impartial, and to have set down fairly the objections which were made to Christianity both by Jews and Heathens, and the reflections which were cast upon it, as well as upon its first preachers. He has likewise, with a just and ingenuous freedom, mentioned the weaknesses, faults, and prejudices, both of the apostles and their converts. The occasional hints, which are dispersed through the epistles of Saint Paul, harmonize with the facts related in the history of the Acts of the Apostles; so that this history is the best guide we can have in studying the epistles. The other parts of the New Testament are in perfect unison with the history, and tend to confirm it; for the doctrines and principles are every where the same. The Gospels close with references to the facts recorded in the Acts, particularly the promise of the Holy Spirit, which we know from the Acts was poured out by Christ upon his disciples after his ascension; and the Epistles, generally, plainly suppose that those facts had actually occurred, which the history relates. So that the history of the Acts is one of the most important parts of sacred history; for, without it, neither the

Gospels nor the Epistles could have been so clearly understood; but by the aid of this book the whole scheme of the Christian revelation is set before us in a clear and easy view*.

Lastly, the incidental circumstances, mentioned by Saint Luke, correspond so exactly, and without any previous view to such a correspondence (in cases too where it could not possibly have been premeditated and precontrived), with the accounts that occur in the Epistles, and with those of the best antient historians, both Jews and Heathens, that no person who had *forged* such a history, in later ages, could have had the same external confirmation: but he must have betrayed himself, by alluding to some customs or opinions which have since sprung up, or by misrepresenting some circumstances, or using some phrase or expression not then in use. The plea of forgery therefore, in later ages, cannot be allowed; and if Saint Luke had published such a history at so early a period, when some of the apostles, or many other persons concerned in the transactions which he has recorded, were alive, and his account had not been true, he would only have exposed himself to an easy confutation, and to certain infamy.

Since, therefore, the Acts of the Apostles are in themselves consistent and uniform; the incidental relations agreeable to the best antient historians that have come down to us; and the main facts supported and confirmed by the other books of the New Testament, as well as by the unanimous testimony of so many of the antient fathers, we are justly authorized to conclude, that, if any history of former times deserves credit, the Acts of the Apostles ought to be received and credited; and if the history of the Acts of the Apostles is true, Christianity cannot be false: for a doctrine, so good in itself, so admirably adapted to the fallen state of man, and attended with so many miraculous and divine testimonies, has all the possible marks of a true revelation. †

* The subject of these coincidences has already been noticed in pp. 345, 346. of this volume. Dr. Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ* amplifies the argument above suggested, and is indispensably necessary to a critical study of the Epistles.

† Dr. Benson's *Hist. of Christianity*, vol. ii. pp. 333—341.



CHAPTER III.

ON THE EPISTOLARY OR DOCTRINAL WRITINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF SAINT PAUL.

SECTION I.

ACCOUNT OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

I. *The birth and education of Saint Paul;—his persecution of the disciples of Christ—and his conversion;—II. His subsequent travels and labours, to his second visit to Jerusalem;—III. His third visit to Jerusalem, and subsequent labours, to his fourth visit to Jerusalem;—IV. His journeys and labours, to his fifth visit to Jerusalem;—V. To his first imprisonment at Rome;—VI. His subsequent journeys, second imprisonment, and martyrdom;—VII. Character of Saint Paul;—VIII. Observations on the style of his writings.*

I. SAUL, also called **PAUL**, (by which name this illustrious apostle was generally known after his preaching among the Gentiles, especially among the Greeks and Romans,) was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a descendant of the patriarch Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin, and a native of Tarsus, then the chief city of Cilicia. By birth he was a citizen of Rome *, a distinguished honour and privilege, which had been conferred on some of his ancestors for services rendered to the commonwealth during the wars †. His father was a Pharisee, and he himself was educated in the most rigid principles of that sect ‡. His sister's son and some others of his relations were Christians, and had embraced the Gospel before his conversion §. That he was early educated in Greek literature at Tarsus, may be inferred from that place being celebrated for polite learning ||, and also from his quotations of several Greek

* Phil. iii. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 22. Acts xvi. 37, 38. xxii. 25. 29. xxiii. 37.

† Dr. Lardner has shown that this is the most probable opinion. Works, 8vo, vol. i. pp. 227—229; 4to, vol. i. pp. 124, 125. Such also is the opinion of John Arntzenius, who has written an elegant dissertation on Saint Paul's citizenship. See his *Dissertationes Binæ*, p. 195. Utrecht, 1725.

‡ Acts xxiii. 6. xxvi. 5. Phil. iii. 5.

§ Acts xxiii. 16—22. Rom. xvi. 7. 11. 21.

|| Strabo the geographer, who lived in the same age as Saint Paul, characterizes the inhabitants of Tarsus as cherishing such a passion for philosophy and all the branches of polite literature, that they greatly excelled even Athens and Alexandria, and every

poets *. From Tarsus Saul removed to Jerusalem, where he made considerable proficiency in the study of the law, and the Jewish traditions, under Gamaliel, a celebrated teacher of that day †. He appears to have been a person of great natural abilities, of quick apprehension, strong passions, and firm resolution; and was thus qualified for signal service, as a teacher of whatever principles he might embrace. He was also blameless in his life, and strictly faithful to the dictates of his conscience, according to the knowledge which he possessed: this is evident from his appeals to the Jews, and from the undissembled satisfaction he expresses on a serious comparison and recollection of his former and later conduct ‡. His parents completed his education by having him taught the art of tent-making §, in conformity with the practice of the Jews, with whom it was customary to teach youth of the highest birth some mechanical employment; by which, in cases of necessity, they might maintain themselves without being burthensome to others. For some time after the appearance of Christianity in the world, he was a bitter enemy and a furious opposer of all who professed that faith; and when the protomartyr Stephen was stoned, Saul was not only consenting to his death, but actually took care of the clothes of the witnesses who had stoned him.

A. D. 34. After this event, Saul took an active part in the persecution of the Christians, not only at Jerusalem, but also throughout Judea ||; and procured letters of commission from the high priest and elders, or sanhedrim, to the synagogue of the Jews at Damascus, empowering him to bring to Jerusalem any Christians, whether men or women, whom he might find there. He also obtained letters to the governor of Damascus, we may presume, to permit them to be removed from his jurisdiction **. While Saul was on his journey thither for this purpose, his miraculous conversion took place, A. D. 35, in the manner recorded in the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apo-

other place where there were schools and academies for philosophy and literature. He adds, that the natives of Tarsus were in the practice of going abroad to other cities to perfect themselves. (Lib. xiv. vol. ii. pp. 960, 961. edit. Oxon). This circumstance accounts for Saint Paul's going to Jerusalem, to finish his studies under Gamaliel.

* On this subject, see Vol. I. pp. 526, 527.

† Acts xxii. 3. xxvi. 5. Gal. i. 14.

‡ Acts xxiii. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. Phil. iii. 6. 1 Tim. i. 13. 2 Tim. i. 3.

§ Michaelis makes Saint Paul to have been a maker of mechanical instruments (vol. iv. pp. 183—186); but all commentators are of opinion that he was a manufacturer of tents, for which, in the East, there was always a considerable demand.

|| Acts viii. 3. xxii. 4. xxvi. 10, 11.

** Acts ix. 2. xxii. 5. xxvi. 12. 2 Cor. xi. 32.

stles, and to which Saint Paul himself has numerous references in his Epistles. *

II. Shortly after his baptism, and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, Saul went into Arabia (Gal. 1. 17); and during his residence in that country he was fully instructed, as we may reasonably think, by divine revelation, and by diligent study of the Old Testament, in the doctrines and duties of the Gospel. Three years after his conversion, he returned to Damascus, A. D. 38 (Gal. 1. 18), and boldly preached the Gospel to the Jews, who rejecting his testimony, as an apostate, conspired to kill him; but, the plot being communicated to Saul, he escaped from Damascus privately by night, and went up to Jerusalem for the first time since his conversion †. After some hesitation on the part of the Christians in that city, he was acknowledged to be a disciple: he remained at Jerusalem only fifteen days, during which his boldness in preaching the Gospel so irritated the Hellenistic Jews, that they conspired against him; “which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea-Philippi, and sent him forth to Tarsus” (Acts ix. 28—30).

A. D. 39. While Saul was in Cilicia, he had those divine visions and revelations of which he speaks in 2 Cor. xii.; on which occasion “*there was given him a thorn in the flesh,* (supposed to have been some paralytic affection of the countenance and voice), “*lest he should have been exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations.*” In the year 42, Saul, accompanied by Barnabas, proceeded to Antioch, where they taught with great success for one year (Acts xi. 26). During their abode in this city, “there came prophets from Jerusalem,” one of whom, named Agabus, “signified by the Spirit that there should be a great dearth throughout the land” of Judea, “which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar,” commencing in the fourth, but raging chiefly in the fifth and sixth years of that emperor. In order to relieve their suffering brethren in Judea, a collection was made by the Christians at Antioch, each according to his ability, and was sent to the church at Jerusalem by the hands of Barnabas and Saul (Acts xi. 27—30), A. D. 44. The trance or

* See particularly 1 Cor. xv. 9. Gal. i. 13. 1 Tim. i. 12, 13. Various opinions have been entertained by learned men respecting the date of Saint Paul's conversion. The date assigned in the text is that adopted by Bishop Pearson. Dr. Lardner fixes that event to the end of 36, or early in 37. Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 236—239; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 252, 253.

† Acts ix. 23—25. Gal. i. 17, 18. 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33.

vision mentioned in Acts xxii. 17. is supposed to have taken place during this second visit to Jerusalem.

III. A. D. 44. Having discharged this trust, Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem to Antioch, taking with them Mark, the nephew of Barnabas (afterwards the evangelist), as an assistant in their approaching mission to the Gentiles, to which Barnabas and Saul were soon after separated by the solemn and express appointment of the Holy Spirit.

A. D. 45. Being thus sent forth, they departed, with John Mark as their minister, to Seleucia, a sea-port town near the mouth of the Orontes, twelve miles below Antioch, and about five from the sea; whence they sailed to Cyprus, the native country of Barnabas, and preached the word of God at Salamis, the nearest port to Syria, at first in the Jewish synagogues, according to their custom. Thence they crossed to Paphos, the capital of the island where Sergius Paulus, the Roman proconsul resided. This magistrate, being desirous to hear the word of God, sent for the apostles; but Barjesus, a Jewish false prophet and sorcerer, opposed them, and sought to pervert the proconsul from the faith. But Saul, full of the Holy Spirit, struck the sorcerer with blindness, for a season, as a punishment for his wicked interference. This astonishing judgment confirming the doctrine of the Lord, converted the proconsul to the faith (Acts xiii. 1—12). As Saint Luke, who has recorded the labours of the great apostle to the Gentiles, calls him no longer Saul, but Paul, learned men have conjectured that the change was made by Saul himself in honour of the proconsul, who was probably his first convert from among the idolatrous Gentiles, or perhaps the first Gentile of high rank who was converted. *

A. D. 46. "Paul and his company" sailed from Cyprus to the coast of Asia Minor, and preached at Perga, a city of Pamphylia, situate about twelve miles from the sea. Here Mark separated from them, and returned to Jerusalem. Thence they proceeded to Antioch, the capital of Pisidia, where, notwithstanding the opposition of the Jews, Paul and Barnabas converted great numbers both of the proselyted and of the idolatrous Gentiles; but, being driven thence by the machinations of the unbelieving Jews, they proceeded to Iconium in Lycaonia (xiii. 13—52). Here they converted many to the faith; but, being in danger of being stoned, they proceeded to

* It was customary among the Romans to assume the name of a benefactor whom they highly esteemed. Thus the Jewish historian Josephus took the name of Flavius, in compliment to Vespasian, with whom he was in high favour.

Lystra, where Paul, working a miracle on a cripple, was at first considered as a god, but was afterwards dragged out of the city, stoned, and left for dead (xiv. 1—20). He rose up, however, perfectly whole; and, quitting Lystra on the following day, he proceeded to Derbe, and preached the Gospel in Galatia and Phrygia, regions adjoining to Lycaonia, whence Paul and his assistants returned through Lystra and Iconium to Antioch in Pisidia, confirming the new converts in the faith, and “ordaining elders in every church.” Having thus traversed all Pisidia, they retraced their way to Perga in Pamphylia, and, embarking at Attalia, returned to Antioch in Syria, after a circuit of about two years. (xiv. 21—27). *

III. A. D. 47, 48. During their residence at Antioch, which is supposed to have been two full years, certain persons came from Judea, and taught that there was no salvation without circumcision and other legal ceremonies. These false teachers Paul and Barnabas withstood; and it was at length agreed to send a deputation to Jerusalem, to obtain the decision of the apostles and elders on this question. For this purpose Paul and Barnabas were deputed; and, travelling through Phenice and Samaria, they arrived at Jerusalem A. D. 49, where it was decreed that the proselyted Gentiles were not obliged to observe the law of Moses as a term or condition of salvation (Acts xv. 1—29). After the council of Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, and made some stay there, probably during the remainder of the year 49, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many assistants (30—35).

About the beginning of the year 50, Paul proposed to Barnabas to take another circuit throughout the churches they had planted in Asia Minor. But Barnabas being desirous of having his nephew Mark for their minister, Paul objected to him who had deserted them in their former journey to Pamphylia (xiii. 13). A sharp contention arose, which terminated in their separation; and Barnabas sailed with Mark to Cyprus, to visit the churches which had been planted there by Paul and himself; while Paul, choosing Silas for his companion, departed from Antioch with the approbation of the church. Passing through Syria and Cilicia, they confirmed the churches in those countries; and thence proceeded to Derbe and Lystra in Lycaonia, to preach

* Bishop Pearson allots three years for these journeys of the apostles, viz. 45, 46, and 47, and something more. But Calmet, Tillemont, Dr. Lardner, Bishop Tomline, and Dr. Hales, allow two years for this purpose, viz. 45 and 46, as above stated; which period corresponds with our Bible chronology.

the Gospel a second time to the Gentiles, and to publish the decrees of the apostolic council of Jerusalem. At Lystra Paul took Timothy as his assistant; and departing thence with Silas, they went through Phrygia and Galatia, publishing every where the decrees (Acts xv. 35—41. xvi. 1—6). Being forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel in Asia, strictly so called, they arrived at Mysia; and being in like manner forbidden to proceed to Bithynia, they passed by the Lesser Mysia, (which separated Bithynia from the region of Troas), and came to the city and port of Troas. Here they were joined by the evangelist Luke (xvi. 7, 8).

A. D. 50. While they were at Troas, Paul and his assistants were called to preach the Gospel in Macedonia by a vision that appeared to Paul during the night. In obedience to the heavenly monition, they sailed directly from Troas to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis, “from thence to Philippi, which was the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony*.” Here Paul converted Lydia, and dispossessed a damsel who had a spirit of divination, for which last transaction Paul and Silas were beaten with rods and imprisoned; but, being liberated (Acts xvi. 9—40), they passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica. Here he preached in the synagogue, and some believed while others persecuted him. Being obliged to quit that city, Paul and his assistants went to Beræa, where they preached with great success; but the unbelieving Jews, coming from Thessalonica, stirred up the people against them. Paul therefore, leaving Silas and Timothy at Beræa, departed to Athens; where he disputed daily in the synagogue with the Jews, and in the market-place

* Commentators are much divided in opinion in what sense the word *πρωτη*, used by Saint Luke, is to be taken. See their opinions in Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 152—154. It is well known that when Paulus Æmilius conquered Macedonia, he divided it into four parts, *μειρη*, and that he called the country that lay between the rivers Strymon and Nessus the *first* part, and made Amphipolis its *chief* city or metropolis. Philippi, therefore, was not actually its *chief* city. But Bishop Pearce has shown, with great probability, that although Amphipolis was made the chief city of Macedon by Æmilius, yet Philippi might have been its metropolis in the time of Saint Paul, which was two hundred and twenty years after the division by Paulus Æmilius. Besides, as it was here that Augustus gained that victory, which put him in possession of the whole Roman empire, might not he have given to Philippi that dignity which was before enjoyed by Amphipolis? It is however certain, from the medals of Greek cities still extant, that more than one city of the same province assumed the title of *πρωτη*, first or chief. Saint Luke, therefore, who spent a long time at Philippi, and was well acquainted with the customs of the place, gave this city the title which it claimed; and which, according to the custom of the Greek cities, was probably inscribed on its coins. Michaelis, *ut supra*. Doddridge, Clarke, and Whitby on Acts xvi. 12. Rosenmüller, tom. iv. p. 578.

with the Epicurean * and Stoic† philosophers. These men carried him before the supreme court of Areopagus for trial, on the capital charge of being “a setter forth of strange demons.” Before this tribunal, composed of senators, philosophers, rhetoricians, and statesmen, Saint Paul delivered his most eloquent and masterly apology; in which, while he retorted the charge of his accusers, he instructed the people, to whom he preached the living God, to them unknown. Although many of his hearers ridiculed the sublime doctrines which he taught, particularly that of the resurrection, yet some of his audience were better disposed, and desirous of further information; and one among his judges was converted, together with Damaris, a woman of some rank, besides others of inferior note (Acts xvii).

A. D. 51. From Athens, Saint Paul proceeded to Corinth, the capital of Achaia, and distinguished for the number, quality, opulence, and learning of its inhabitants. Here he tarried a year and six months, i. e. the latter part of the year 51, the whole of 52, and the early part of 53. His principal associates in the ministry, besides Timothy and Silas who came to him from Thessalonica, were Aquila, a Jew of Pontus, and his wife Priscilla, who had lately come thither from Rome, whence the emperor Claudius had banished all the Jews on account of their turbulence, and with whom he worked at their

* The Stoics, mentioned in Acts xvii. 18. were a sect of heathen philosophers, of which Zeno, who flourished about 350 years before Christ, was the original founder. They received their denomination from the place in which Zeno delivered his lectures, which was a portico (ΣΤΟΑ) at Athens. Their distinguishing tenets were, the eternity of matter, the corporeity of God, the conflagration and renovation of the world. They were most rigid Necessarians, and believed that all things were subjected to an irresistible and irreversible fatality. They strenuously asserted that man was self-sufficient to his own virtue and happiness, and stood in no need of divine assistance—that virtue was its own sufficient reward, and vice its own sufficient punishment. The grand end and aim of their severe philosophy was to divest human nature of all passions and affections—and they made the highest attainment and perfection of virtue consist in a total apathy and insensibility to human evils. Their wise man was equal if not superior to Jupiter himself, and had no such things as wants and imperfections about him. They affected great austerity in their manners, a proud singularity of dress and habit, and were distinguished, above all the other sects of philosophy, for their superior haughtiness and supercilious arrogance.

† The Epicureans, also mentioned in Acts xvii. 18, were the followers of Epicurus, who flourished about 300 years before Christ. They maintained that sensual pleasure was man’s supreme felicity—that the beautiful fabric of the world was formed by a fortuitous concourse of atoms—that the government of the world was business very unworthy the majesty of the gods—and that the immortal powers were perpetually reclining on the clouds, in soft inactive ease and indolence, regaling on nectar and ambrosia, and gratifying every wandering libidinous desire. They derided the doctrine of a providence—asserted that future rewards and punishments were all a ridiculous and romantic chimera—that the present life was the whole of human existence, and that the soul, at death, suffered one common extinction with the body.

common trade of tent-makers for his livelihood. From this city he wrote his two Epistles to the Thessalonians, and perhaps also that to the Galatians. The success of Saint Paul, in preaching the Gospel at Corinth and in Peloponnesus, so irritated the unbelieving Jews, that they dragged him before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia; who, prudently refusing to interfere in religious opinions that were not detrimental to the state, drove them from his tribunal (xviii. 1—17). After continuing some further time at Corinth, Saint Paul embarked at Cenchrea, the eastern port of Corinth, for Ephesus, where he left Aquila and Priscilla, and proceeded thence to Cæsarea and Jerusalem; from which latter city he returned to Antioch (18—22).

IV. A. D. 54—56. After some stay at Antioch, Saint Paul visited the churches of Galatia and Phrygia, and came to Ephesus, where he found Aquila and Priscilla (Acts xviii. 24—28), and conferred the Holy Spirit on twelve of John the Baptist's disciples. Saint Paul, as usual, preached first in the synagogues, but, being opposed by the Jews, he afterwards taught in the school of one Tyrannus with great success, and performed numerous miracles (xix. 1—20). During this residence, probably about the beginning of the year 56, Saint Paul received a letter from the Corinthians, to whom he wrote his first Epistle. But being assaulted by Demetrius, a silversmith, and others of his profession, who were employed in making silver shrines in which images of Diana were to be enclosed, and were apprehensive that their trade would suffer from his preaching, Saint Paul quitted that city, where he had gathered a numerous church (Acts xix. 21—41, xx. 1).

A. D. 56. On his departure from Ephesus, Saint Paul went first to Troas, expecting to meet Titus on his return from Corinth (2 Cor. ii. 12, 13). Here he preached a short time with great success, and then proceeded to Macedonia, where he received the collections of the Macedonian Christians for their poor brethren in Judea.

A. D. 57. In his progress from Macedonia into Greece, he is supposed to have preached the Gospel on the confines of Illyricum, as mentioned in Rom. xv. 19. Saint Paul continued three months in Greece, principally, it is supposed, at Corinth (whence he wrote his Epistle to the Romans); and having received the money which the churches had collected for the poor Christians in Judea, he sailed from Philippi* to Troas,

* While Saint Paul was in Macedonia, he wrote his Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

and thence to Miletus, whither the elders of the Ephesian church had come to meet him by his appointment, to whom Saint Paul gave a most affecting farewell charge (Acts xx).

A. D. 58. From Miletus Paul and his company sailed directly to Cos, next to Rhodes, and thence to Patara; here, finding a vessel bound to Phœnicia, they embarked, and, leaving Cyprus on their left, they landed at Tyre. After waiting seven days, they sailed to Ptolemais, from which port they went on foot to Cæsarea, where they lodged with Philip the evangelist. During their stay here for several days, the prophet Agabus foretold the imprisonment of Saint Paul, who, persisting in his determination to go to Jerusalem, was at length permitted to depart: he accordingly arrived there, for the fifth time, just before the feast of Pentecost, A. D. 58, and was gladly received by the brethren (xxi. 1—18).

V. A. D. 58. The day after their arrival at Jerusalem, Paul and his assistants related to James and the elders of the church “what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry, and when they heard it, they glorified the Lord.” Shortly after this, some Asiatic Jews, probably from Ephesus, seeing Paul in the temple, whither he had gone to assist some of the brethren to discharge a vow of Nazariteship*, excited the multitude to kill the apostle, who was with difficulty rescued from their fury by Lysias, the chief captain or tribune of the temple guard. On the following morning Paul was conducted before the council, when he declared himself to be a Pharisee. A contest having arisen between the Pharisees and Sadducees, members of the sanhedrim, Lysias, being apprehensive for Paul’s safety, commanded the soldiers to rescue him, and directed the council to accuse him before Felix the procurator at Cæsarea (Acts xxii—xxiii). Five days after, Ananias the high priest, accompanied by the elders and by a certain orator named Tertullus, proceeded to that city, and accused him to Felix of sedition, heresy, and profanation of the temple. These charges were denied by Saint Paul, who gave an account of his faith; but the governor, though convinced of his innocence, being unwilling to displease the Jews, and also hoping that Paul would have given money to be liberated, ordered the apostle to be kept in easy confinement, and allowed his friends to visit him. A few days after this transaction, Felix, at the request of his wife Drusilla, sent for Paul, who gave them an account of his faith in Christ, and

* On the nature of this vow, see Vol. I. pp. 117, 118, *supra*.

reasoned so forcibly concerning righteousness, chastity, and a judgment to come, that the profligate governor's conscience was alarmed *. “Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.” That season, however, never came; and Felix, two years afterwards, when recalled from his government, left Paul in prison in order to gratify the Jews (Acts xxiv).

A. D. 60. Felix was succeeded in the government of Judea by Festus, who sat in judgment on Saint Paul, and having heard the accusations of the Jews against him, and his defence, proposed a new trial at Jerusalem in order to ingratiate himself with the Jews. But this was declined by Paul, who appealed to the emperor. Shortly after this, Agrippa king of Chalcis, and his sister Berenice, having come to Cæsarea to congratulate Festus, the latter communicated Paul's case to him, and brought the apostle forth to plead his cause before Agrippa. Accordingly Saint Paul vindicated himself in so masterly a manner, as to extort an acknowledgment of his innocence from Agrippa himself (Acts xxv. xxvi); but, having appealed to the emperor, it became necessary to send him to Rome, where he at length arrived in the spring of the year 61, after a very tempestuous passage, the particulars of which are related in Acts xxvii. and xxviii. 1—16. Here he was permitted to reside in his own hired house, with the soldier who kept him †. On the third day after his arrival, he sent for the chief of the unbelieving Jews, to whom he explained the cause of his imprisonment, though with little success; and afterwards, during the two years of his confinement (from the spring of A. D. 61 to the early part of 63), he received all that came to his house, preaching the Gospel without any impediment whatever (Acts xxviii. 17—31). During this first visit to Rome, Saint Paul wrote his Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon.

VI. As Saint Luke has not continued Saint Paul's history beyond his first imprisonment at Rome, we have no authentic record of his subsequent travels and labours from the spring of A. D. 63, when he was released ‡, to the time of his martyrdom. But, from the intimations contained in the Epistles which he

* With what admirable propriety Saint Paul suited his address to the characters of Felix and Drusilla, see Vol. I. p. 76.

† On the manner of Saint Paul's confinement, see Vol. I. p. 86.

‡ It is not known by what means Saint Paul was delivered from prison. Calmet conjectures, with great probability, that the Jews durst not prosecute him before the emperor.

wrote from Rome during his first confinement, some learned men have conjectured that he sailed from Italy to Judea, accompanied by Timothy and Titus; and leaving Titus in Crete (Tit. 1. 5), he proceeded thence with Timothy to Judea, and visited the churches in that country, to which he had lately sent from Italy (perhaps from Rome) the Epistle which is now inscribed *to the Hebrews*. Having visited the churches in Syria, Cilicia, and Asia Minor, Paul and Timothy continued some time at Colosse; and, leaving Timothy at Ephesus, Paul proceeded to Macedonia, visiting the churches. From this country he wrote his Epistle to Titus, and also his first Epistle to Timothy. Having also visited the churches of Greece, and probably that of Corinth for the second time, Saint Paul passed the winter of 64 at Nicopolis, a city of Epirus; thence he proceeded to Crete, and perhaps to Corinth for the *third* time*; and early in 65 arrived at Rome, where his active exertions in preaching the Gospel caused him to be imprisoned a second time. How long Paul continued in prison at this time, we know not; but, from the circumstance of his being brought twice before the emperor Nero or his prefect, Dr. Macknight thinks it probable that he was confined a year or more before he was put to death. As the Neronian persecution of the Christians raged greatly during this second visit to Rome, Paul, knowing the time of his departure to be at hand, wrote his second Epistle to Timothy; from which we learn, that, though the apostle's assistants, terrified with the danger, forsook him and fled, yet he was not altogether destitute of consolation; for the brethren of Rome came to him privately, and ministered to him (2 Tim. iv. 12. 21). Concerning the precise manner of Saint Paul's death, we have no certain information; but, according to primitive tradition, he was beheaded, on the 29th of June A. D. 66, at *Aquæ Salvæ*, three miles from Rome, and interred in the *Via Ostensis*, at a spot two miles from the city, where Constantine the Great afterwards erected a church to his memory. "But his noblest monument subsists in his immortal writings; which, the more they are studied, and the better they are understood, the more they will be admired to the latest posterity for the most sublime and beautiful, the most pathetic and impressive, the most learned and profound specimens of Christian piety, oratory, and philosophy †."

* Such is the supposition of Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 37.

† Dr. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book ii. pp. 1155—1254. Dr. Lardner, Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 234—301; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 251—284, whose dates have chiefly been followed. Dr. Benson's History of the First Planting of Christianity,

VII. Such were the life and labours of "Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ," which have justly been considered as an irrefragable proof of the truth of the Christian revelation. How indefatigably he exerted himself to make known the glad tidings of salvation, the preceding brief sketch will sufficiently evince. "We see him in the prosecution of his purpose, travelling from country to country, enduring every species of hardship, encountering every extremity of danger, assaulted by the populace, punished by the magistrates, scourged, beaten, stoned, left for dead; expecting, wherever he came, a renewal of the same treatment and the same dangers; yet, when driven from one city, preaching in the next, spending his whole time in the employment, sacrificing to it his pleasures, his ease, his safety; persisting in this course to old age (through more than thirty years); unaltered by the experience of perverseness, ingratitude, prejudice, desertion; unsubdued by anxiety, want, labour, persecutions; unwearied by long confinement, undismayed by the prospect of death *."

But this great luminary of the Christian church did not confine his labours to the preaching of the Gospel. He wrote fourteen Epistles, in which the various doctrines and duties of Christianity are explained, and inculcated with peculiar sublimity and force of language; at the same time that they exhibit the character of their great author in a most amiable and endearing point of view. His faith was a practical principle, influencing all the powers and faculties of the soul; his morality was of the purest and most exalted kind. He "derives all duties from the love of God in Christ as their foundation. All the motives to right action, all the arguments for holiness of life, are drawn from this source; all the lines of duty converge to this centre. If Paul censures, he points to this only spring of hope; if he laments, he turns to this only true source of consolation; if he insists that the *grace of God hath appeared*, he points to its practical object, "teaching us to live soberly, righteously, and godly." When he determines to know nothing but his Saviour, and even him under the degrading circumstances of crucifixion, he includes in that knowledge all the religious and moral benefits of which it is susceptible †."

vol. i. pp. 144—290. vol. ii. *passim*. Dr. Macknight's Life of the Apostle Paul, annexed to the fourth volume (4to), or the sixth volume (8vo), of his translation of the Epistles.

* Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, p. 379.

† Mrs. More's Essay on Saint Paul, vol. i. p. 109, to which the reader is referred for an ample and beautiful account of the character and writings of that illustrious apostle. See also Dr. Graves's Essay on the Character of the Apostles and Evangelists, ch. v. pp. 145—218.

Integrity, tenderness of heart, disinterestedness, heavenly-mindedness, profound knowledge of human nature, and delicacy in giving advice or reproof, are the leading characteristics of Saint Paul's writings; in which, while he every where maintains the utmost respect for constituted authorities, he urges and unfolds the various, social, and relative duties in the most engaging and impressive manner.

VIII. "All the writings of Saint Paul bespeak him a man of a most exalted genius, and the strongest abilities. His composition is peculiarly nervous and animated. He possessed a fervid conception, a glowing but chastised fancy, a quick apprehension, and a most immensely ample and liberal heart. Inheriting from nature distinguished powers, he carried the culture and improvement of them to the most exalted height to which human learning could push them. An excellent scholar, an acute reasoner, a great orator, a most instructive and spirited writer. Longinus, a person of the finest taste, and justest discernment in criticism and polite literature, classes the apostle Paul among the most celebrated* orators of Greece. His speeches in the Acts of the Apostles are worthy the Roman senate. They breathe a most generous fire and fervour, are animated with a divine spirit of liberty and truth, abound with instances of as fine address as any the most celebrated orations of Demosthenes or Cicero can boast; and his answers, when at the bar, to the questions proposed to him by the court, have a politeness, and a greatness, which nothing in antiquity hardly ever equalled. Witness that celebrated reply to king Agrippa, who publicly declared to him he had almost persuaded him to be a Christian. *Would to God that not only YOU, but also ALL that hear me this day, were not ALMOST, but ALTOGETHER, such as I am*—EXCEPT THESE BONDS. What a prodigious effect must this striking conclusion, and the sight of the irons held up to enforce it, make upon the minds of the audience! To his singular attainments in learning the Roman governor publicly bore an honourable testimony, imagining that the intense-ness of his application to his studies, and his profound erudition, had disordered his understanding, and occasioned this supposed insanity.

"His writings show him eminently acquainted with Greek learning and Hebrew literature. He greatly excelled in the profound and accurate knowledge of the Old Testament, which he is perpetually citing and explaining with great skill and

* Longinus, p. 260. Pearce, 8vo.

judgment, and pertinently accommodating to the subject he is discussing. Born at Tarsus, the most illustrious seat of the muses in those days, initiated in that city into the learning and philosophy of the Greeks, conversing, in early life, with their most elegant and celebrated writers, whom we find him quoting, and afterwards finishing his course of education at the feet of Gamaliel, the learned Jewish rabbi, he came forth into public and active life, with a mind stored with the most ample and various treasures of science and knowledge. He himself tells us, that the distinguished progress he had made was known to all the Jews, and that in this literary career he left all his co-equals and contemporaries far behind him. *I profited in the Jewish religion above my fellows.* A person possessed of natural abilities so signal, of literary acquisitions so extensive, of an activity and spirit so enterprising, and of an integrity and probity so inviolate, the wisdom of God judged a fit instrument to employ in displaying the banners and spreading the triumphs of Christianity among mankind. A negligent greatness, if we may so express it, appears in his writings. Full of the dignity of his subject, a torrent of sacred eloquence bursts forth, and bears down every thing before it with irresistible rapidity. He stays not to arrange and harmonize his words and his periods, but rushes on, as his vast ideas transport him, borne away by the sublimity of his theme. Hence his frequent and prolix digressions, though at the same time his all-comprehensive mind never loses sight of his subject, but he returns from these excursions, resumes and pursues it with an ardour and strength of reasoning that astonishes and convinces. He introduces any subject, which he is afraid will prejudice and disgust his bigotted countrymen the Jews, with an humility and modesty that secures your attention, and with an insinuating form of address to which you can deny nothing. This appears particularly in his Epistle to the Romans, where we see with what reluctance and heartfelt grief he mentions the ungrateful truth of the Jews' rejection of the Messiah, and their dereliction by God for their insuperable obstinacy. How studious he is to provoke them to jealousy and emulation by the example of the Gentiles, and how many persuasive and cogent arts and arguments does he employ to win them over to the religion of Jesus! In these delicate touches, in these fine arts of moral suasion, Saint Paul greatly excels. Upon occasion, also, we find him employing the most keen and cutting raillery in satirizing the faults and foibles of those to whom he wrote. With what sarcastic pleasantry does he animadvert upon the Corinthians for

their injudicious folly, in suffering themselves to be duped by a false judaizing teacher ! I do not remember ever to have met with an instance of irony more delicate and poignant than the following passage : *In what respect*, says he to the Corinthians, *have you been inferior to the other churches, except that I never extorted a maintenance from you—do forgive me this injury!*—To his eloquence, as a public speaker, we have the testimony of the Lycaonians, who, foolishly imagining the gods to have descended from heaven among them in the persons of Barnabas and Paul, called the former Jupiter, and the latter Mercury, because he was the chief speaker. And though it is said his *bodily presence was mean, and his speech contemptible*, yet it ought to be remembered, that this was the aspersion of his enemies, the effusion of malignity, to defame and sink him, and ruin his usefulness *.”

* Dr. Harwood's Introd. to the New Test. vol. i. pp. 199—203. See also Michaelis's Introduction, vol. i. pp. 149—159.

SECTION II.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE APOSTOLICAL EPISTLES IN GENERAL, AND THOSE OF SAINT PAUL IN PARTICULAR.

- I. *Importance of the Epistles ;—Nature of these writings ;—II. Number and order of the Epistles, particularly those of Saint Paul ;—III. Of the Catholic Epistles, and their order ;—IV. General plan of the Apostolic Epistles ;—V. Causes of their obscurity considered and explained ;—Observations on the phraseology of Saint Paul in particular.*

I. **THE EPISTLES**, or letters addressed to various Christian communities, and also to individuals, by the apostles Paul, James, Peter, and John, form the second principal division of the New Testament. These writings abundantly confirm all the material facts related in the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles. The particulars of our Saviour's life and death are often referred to in them, as grounded upon the undoubted testimony of eye-witnesses, and as being the foundation of the Christian religion. The speedy propagation of the Christian faith, recorded in the Acts, is confirmed beyond all contradiction by innumerable passages in the Epistles, written to the churches already planted ; and the miraculous gifts, with which the

apostles were endued, are often appealed to in the same writings, as an undeniable evidence of the divine mission of the apostles *.

Though all the essential doctrines and precepts of the Christian religion were unquestionably taught by our Saviour himself, and are contained in the Gospels, yet it is evident to any person who attentively studies the Epistles, that they are to be considered as commentaries on the doctrines of the Gospel, addressed to particular Christian societies or persons, in order to explain and apply those doctrines more fully, to confute some growing errors, to compose differences and schisms, to reform abuses and corruptions, to excite the Christians to holiness, and to encourage them against persecutions. And since these Epistles were written (as we have already shown †) under divine inspiration, and have uniformly been received by the Christian church as the productions of inspired writers, it consequently follows, (notwithstanding some writers have insinuated that they are not of equal authority with the Gospels, while others would reject them altogether) that what the apostles have delivered in these epistles, as necessary to be believed or done by Christians, must be as necessary to be believed and practised in order to salvation, as the doctrines and precepts delivered by Jesus Christ himself, and recorded in the Gospels; because, in writing these Epistles, the sacred penmen were the servants, apostles, ambassadors, and ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, and their doctrines and precepts are the will, the mind, the truth, and the commandments of God himself ‡. On account of the fuller displays of evangelical truth contained in this portion of the sacred volume, the Epistles have by some divines been termed the DOCTRINAL BOOKS of the New Testament.

That the preceding view of the Epistles is correct, will appear from the following considerations.

In the first place, they announce and explain DOCTRINES of which our Saviour had not fully treated in his discourses, and which consequently are not clearly delivered in the Gospels.

Thus, there were some things which our Saviour did not fully and clearly explain to his disciples (John xvi. 12), but accommodated his expressions to those prejudices in which they had been educated. Of this description were his discourses concerning the nature of his kingdom; which, agreeably to the

* See particularly 1 Cor. xii. and xiv.

† See pp. 378—380, *supra*.

‡ Dr. Whitby's General Preface to the Epistles, § 1. On the subject of the preceding paragraph, see also Dr. Magee's Discourses, vol. i. pp. 471—474. and vol. ii. pp. 317, *et seq.*

erroneous notions then entertained by their countrymen, the apostles expected would be a temporal kingdom, and accompanied with the same pomp and splendour which are the attendants of an earthly monarchy. This opinion was so deeply rooted in the minds of the apostles, that Jesus Christ did not think proper to eradicate it all at once, but rather chose to remove it by gentle and easy degrees. Accordingly, in compliance with their prejudices, we find him describing his kingdom, and the pre-eminence they were to enjoy in it, *by eating and drinking at his table, and sitting on thrones, and judging the twelve tribes of Israel* *.

But after the Holy Spirit had given the apostles clear and distinct apprehensions of the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and the real nature of its happiness, we find what noble representations they give of the glories which are laid up in heaven for true Christians, and what powerful arguments they take from this to persuade them not to set their minds upon the things of this world. They describe the happiness of the world to come by an *inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away* †: *by a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness* ‡, *where God shall be all in all* §: he shall reign with an absolute dominion, and it shall be our honour and happiness that God is exalted. They exhort us not to set our minds upon *the things that are seen, and are temporal; but on those things which are not seen, and are eternal* ||: and by the continual exercise of faith and patience, of mortification and contempt of this world, to *make ourselves meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light* **.

Again, it was the same prejudice concerning the temporal glories of Christ's kingdom, which caused his disciples to misunderstand the meaning of his various clear and explicit discourses concerning his sufferings, death, and resurrection ††. They vainly expected that their master would gain earthly conquests and triumphs, and they could not apprehend how he should become glorious through sufferings. In consequence of these mistaken ideas, the doctrine of the cross and its saving effects were not understood by the apostles (Matt. xvi. 22.) until our Saviour had opened their understandings by his discourses on this subject after his resurrection; and therefore we cannot expect so perfect an exposition of that great and fundamental article of Christianity in the Gospels, as in the

* Luke xxii. 30. Matt. xix. 28.

† 1 Pet. i. 4.

‡ 2 Pet. iii. 12.

§ 1 Cor. xv. 28.

|| 2 Cor. iv. 18.

** Col. i. 12.

†† See Mark ix. 10. Luke ix. 45. xviii. 34.

Epistles, in which, *Christ's dying for our sins, and rising again for our justification*, is every where insisted upon as the foundation of all our hopes; and the doctrine of the cross is there spoken of as a truth of such importance, that Saint Paul *, in comparison of it, despises every other kind of knowledge, whether divine or human. Hence it is that the Apostles deduce those powerful motives to obedience, which are taken from the love, humility, and condescension of our Lord, and the right which he has to our service, having purchased us with the price of his blood †. Hence they derive those great obligations, which lie upon Christians to exercise the duties of mortification and self-denial; of *crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts ‡*: of patience under afflictions, and rejoicing in tribulations §: of being dead to this world, and *seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God ||*. Thus, as our Saviour *spoiled principalities and powers, and triumphed over his enemies by the cross ***, so the believer overcomes the world by being crucified to it; and *becomes more than conqueror through Christ that loved him*.

Once more, it is in the Epistles principally that we are clearly taught the calling of the Gentiles to make one church with the Jews. Our Lord, indeed, had intimated this glorious event in some general expressions, and also in some of his parables † †; and the numerous prophecies of the Old Testament, which foretell the calling of the Gentiles, were sufficient to convince the Jews, that in the times of the Messiah God would reveal the knowledge of himself and his will to the world more fully than ever he had done before. But the extraordinary value which they had for themselves, and the privileges which they fancied were peculiar to their own nation, made them unwilling to believe that the Gentiles should ever be *fellow-heirs with the Jews, of the same body or church with them, and partakers of the same promises in Christ by the Gospel ‡ ‡*. This Saint Peter himself could hardly be persuaded to believe, till he was convinced by a particular vision vouchsafed to him for that purpose § §. And Saint Paul tells us that this was a mystery which was but newly revealed to the apostles

* 1 Cor. ii. 2.

† See 1 Cor. vi. 20. 2 Cor. v. 15. Gal. ii. 20. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

‡ Gal. v. 24. vi. 14. Rom. vi. 6. 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2.

§ Phil. iii. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 19, &c. iv. 13.

|| Col. iii. 1, &c.

** Col. ii. 15.

†† See Matt. viii. 1. xx. 1. Luke xv. 11, &c.

‡‡ Ephes. iii. 6.

§§ Acts x. 28.

by the Spirit*: and therefore not fully discovered by Christ before.

Lastly, it is in the Epistles chiefly that the inefficacy of the law to procure our justification in the sight of God, the cessation of the law, and the eternal and unchangeable nature of Christ's priesthood, are set forth. Compare Rom. iii. 20. 25. Gal. ii. 21. iii. 16. v. 2. 5. Heb. ix. 10. vii. 18. v. 5, 6. vii. 24, 25.

Secondly, in the Epistles only we have instructions concerning many great and necessary DUTIES.

Such are the following, viz. That all our thanksgivings are to be offered up to God in the name of Christ†. The duties which we owe to our civil governors are only hinted in these words of Christ—"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," but are enlarged upon in Saint Paul's Epistles to the Romans (xiii), and to Titus (iii. 1), and also in the first Epistle of Saint Peter (ii. 10. 17). In like manner the duties, which we owe to the ministers of the Gospel (our spiritual governors), are more expressly taught in Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (vi. 6), the Thessalonians (1 Thess. v. 12, 13), and to the Hebrews (xiii. 17, 18). Lastly, all the duties belonging to the relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, are particularly treated in the Epistles to the Ephesians (v. 28—33. vi. 1—9), and the Colossians (iii. 11—25); but are scarcely ever mentioned in the Gospels. This is a convincing argument that the Holy Spirit, who influenced the pens of the apostles, not only regarded the particular exigencies of the Christians who lived in those times, but also directed the sacred writers to enlarge on such points of doctrine and practice, as were of universal concern, and would be for the benefit of the faithful in all succeeding generations‡.

II. The Epistles contained in the New Testament are twenty-one in number, and are generally divided into two classes, the Epistles of Saint Paul, and the Catholic Epistles. Of these apostolical letters, fourteen were written by the great apostle of the Gentiles; they are not placed in our Bibles according to the order of time when they were composed, but according to the supposed precedence of the societies or persons to whom they were addressed. Thus, the Epistles to churches are disposed according to the rank of the cities or places

* Eph. iii. 5. † Compare Eph. v. 8. 20. 1 Thess. v. 18. Heb. xiii. 14, 15.

‡ Whitby, vol. ii. p. 1. Lowth's Directions for the Profitable Reading of the Scriptures, pp. 199—211.

whither they were sent. The Epistle to the Romans stands first, because Rome was the chief city of the Roman empire: this is followed by the two Epistles to the Corinthians, because Corinth was a large, polite, and renowned city. To them succeeds the Epistle to the Galatians, who were the inhabitants of Galatia, a region of Asia Minor, in which were several churches. Next follows the Epistle to the Ephesians, because Ephesus was the chief city of Asia Minor, strictly so called. Afterwards come the Epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians; for which order Dr. Lardner can assign no other probable reason than this, viz. That Philippi was a Roman colony, and therefore the Epistle to the Philippians was placed before those to the Colossians and Thessalonians, whose cities were not distinguished by any particular circumstance. He also thinks it not unlikely that the shortness of the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, especially of the second, caused them to be placed last among the letters addressed to churches, though in point of time they are the earliest of Saint Paul's Epistles, and indeed the first written of all the sacred Scriptures of the New Testament.

Among the Epistles addressed to particular persons, those to Timothy have the precedence, as he was a favourite disciple of Saint Paul, and also because those Epistles are the longest and fullest. To them succeeds the Epistle to Titus, who was an evangelist; and that to Philemon is placed last, as he was supposed to have been only a private Christian. Last of all comes the Epistle to the Hebrews, because its authenticity was doubted for a short time (though without any foundation, as will be shown in a subsequent page); Dr. Lardner also thinks that it was the last written of all Saint Paul's Epistles.

Some learned men, who have examined the chronology of Saint Paul's Epistles, have proposed to arrange them in our Bibles, according to the order of time; but to this classification there are two serious objections, viz. 1. The order of their dates has not yet been satisfactorily or unanimously settled; and, 2. Very considerable difficulty will attend the alteration of that order which has been adopted in all the editions and versions of the New Testament. This was the received arrangement in the time of Eusebius, who flourished in the beginning of the third century, and probably also of Irenæus, who lived in the second century. Consequently it is the most antient order; in Dr. Lardner's judgment it is the best that can be adopted*; and therefore we have retained the received

* Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 646—649; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 407, 408.

order in the subsequent part of this work. As, however, a knowledge of the probable order in which Saint Paul's Epistles were written, cannot fail to be both instructive and useful to the biblical student, we have deemed it proper to subjoin their chronological order as it has been adjusted by the learned and accurate Dr. Lardner, which exhibits the places where and the times when they were in all probability respectively written. The dates, &c. assigned by other learned men, are duly noticed in the following pages.

EPISTLES.	PLACES.	A. D.
1 Thessalonians	Corinth	52
2 Thessalonians	Corinth	52
Galatians	{ Corinth, or Ephesus	Near the end of - 52 Or beginning of - 53
1 Corinthians	Ephesus	The beginning of - 53
1 Timothy	Macedonia	56
Titus	Macedonia, or near it	Before the end of - 56
2 Corinthians	Macedonia	About October - 57
Romans	Corinth	About February - 58
Ephesians	Rome	About April - 61
2 Timothy	Rome	About May - 61
Philippians	Rome	Before the end of - 62
Colossians	Rome	Before the end of - 62
Philemon	Rome	Before the end of - 62
Hebrews	{ Rome, or Italy	} In spring of - 63

III. The *Catholic Epistles* are seven in number, and contain the letters of the apostles James, Peter, John, and Jude. they are termed *Catholic* *, that is, general or universal, because they are not addressed to the believers of some particular city or country, or to individuals, as Saint Paul's Epistles were, but to Christians in general or to Christians of several countries. The subjoined table exhibits the dates of the Catholic Epistles, and also the places where they were written, agreeably to the order proposed by Dr. Lardner †.

EPISTLE.	PLACE.	A. D.
James	Judea	{ Or beginning of - 61 62
The Two Epistles of Peter	{ Rome	64
1 John	Ephesus	About - - 80
Second and Third of John	{ Ephesus	{ Between - - 80 And - - 90
Jude	Unknown	64 or 65

* On the origin and reasons of this appellation, see Chapter IV. *infra*.

† Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. iii. pp. 465, 466. Moldenhawer, *Introd. ad Libros Vet. et Nov. Test.* p. 205.

IV. The general plan on which the Epistles are written, is, *first*, to discuss and decide the controversy, or to refute the erroneous notions, which had arisen in the church, or among the persons, to whom they are addressed, and which was the occasion of their being written; and, *secondly*, to recommend the observance of those duties, which would be necessary, and of absolute importance to the Christian church in every age, consideration being chiefly given to those particular graces or virtues of the Christian character, which the disputes that occasioned the Epistles might tempt them to neglect. In pursuing this method, regard is had, first, to the nature and faculties of the soul of man, in which the understanding is to lead the way, and the will, affections, and active powers are to follow; and, secondly, to the nature of religion in general, which is a reasonable service, teaching us that we are not to be determined by superstitious fancies, nor by blind passions, but by a *sound judgment*, and a *good understanding* of the mind and will of God; and also showing us the necessary union of faith and practice, of truth and holiness; and that the performance of moral duties will never be acceptable to God, or available to our own salvation, without the belief of the truth. The pious, affectionate, and faithful manner in which the apostles admonish, reprove, exhort, or offer consolation, can only be adequately appreciated by him, who, by patient and diligent study, is enabled to enter fully into the spirit of the inspired authors.

V. Explicit as the Epistles unquestionably are in all fundamental points, it is not to be denied that some parts of them are more difficult to be understood than the Gospels*. The reason of these seeming difficulties is evident. In an Epistle, many things are omitted, or only slightly mentioned, because they are supposed to be known by the person to whom it is addressed; but, to a person unacquainted with such particulars, they cannot but present considerable difficulty. The affairs discussed by Saint Paul were certainly well known to the persons to whom he wrote; who consequently would easily apprehend his meaning, and see the force and tendency of his discourse. As, however, we who live at this distance of time,

* The following remark of a late excellent writer, on the Scriptures in general, is particularly applicable to Saint Paul's epistles.—“Difficulties indeed there are, but the life-directing precepts they contain are sufficiently easy; and he, who reads the Scriptures with an unprejudiced mind, must be convinced, that the whole end they have in view is to lead mankind to their truest and best happiness, both here and hereafter. They inform our reason, they guide our consciences; in short, they have the words both of temporal and eternal life.” Gilpin's Sermons, vol. iv. p. 335. See also Mrs. More's Essay on Saint Paul, vol. i. pp. 59—72.

can obtain no information concerning the occasion of his writing, or the character and circumstances of the persons for whom his Epistles were intended, except what can be collected from the Epistles themselves, it is not strange that several things in them should appear obscure to us. Further, it is evident from many passages, that he answers letters sent, and questions proposed to him, by his correspondents; which, if they had been preserved, would have illustrated different passages much better than all the notes of commentators and critics.

To these causes of obscurity, which are common to all the writers of the Epistles, we may add some that are peculiar to Saint Paul, owing to his style and temper. Possessing an ardent, acute, and fertile mind (as we have seen in the preceding section), he seems to have written with great rapidity, and without closely attending to method. Hence arise those frequent parentheses which occur in his Epistles. In the course of his argument he sometimes breaks off abruptly, in order to pursue a new thought that is necessary for the support of some point arising from the subject, though not immediately leading to it; and, when he has exhausted such new idea, he returns from his digression without any intimation of the change of topic, so that considerable attention is requisite in order to retain the connexion *. His frequent changes of persons, and propositions of objections, which he answers without giving any formal intimation, are also causes of ambiguity. To these we may add, 1. The modern divisions of chapters and verses, which dissolve the connexion of parts, and break them into fragments; and, 2. Our uncertainty concerning the persons addressed, as well as the opinions and practices to which the great apostle of the Gentiles alludes, sometimes only in exhortations and reproofs †. Other causes of obscurity might be assigned, but the preceding are the most material; and the knowledge of them, if we study with a *right* spirit, will enable us to ascertain the rest without difficulty. The most useful mode of studying the epistolary writings of the New Testament is, unquestionably, that proposed and recommended by Mr. Locke; which, having been already noticed when treating on the doctrinal interpretation of the Scriptures, it is not necessary again to repeat ‡.

* On the subject of these parentheses, see Vol. I. pp. 342—344.

† Locke's Essay for the Understanding of Saint Paul's Epistles, (Works, vol. iii. pp. 275, *et seq.*)

‡ See Vol. I. pp. 622—640.

SECTION III.

ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

I. *Date, and where written*;—II. *Genuineness and authenticity of this Epistle*;—III. *The church at Rome, when and by whom founded*;—IV. *Occasion and scope*;—V. *Internal state of the church at Rome*;—VI. *Scope*;—VII. *Synopsis of its contents*;—VIII. *Observations on this Epistle.*

I. **THE** Epistle to the Romans, though seventh in order of time, is placed first of all the apostolical letters, either from the pre-eminence of Rome, as being the mistress of the world, or because it is the longest and most comprehensive of all Saint Paul's Epistles. Various years have been assigned for its date. Van Til refers it to the year 55; Langius, Bishop Pearson, Drs. Mill and Whitby, Fabricius, Reineccius, and others, to the year 57; Baronius, Michaelis, Lord Barrington, Drs. Benson and Lardner, and Bishop Tomline, to the year 58; Archbishop Usher, and our Bible chronology, to the year 60; Dr. Hales to the end of 58, or the beginning of 59; and Rosenmüller to the end of the year 58. The most probable date is that which assigns this epistle to the end of 57, or the beginning of 58; at which time Saint Paul was at Corinth, whence he was preparing to go to Jerusalem with the collections which had been made by the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia for their poor brethren in Judea (Rom. xv. 25—27). The Epistle was dictated by the apostle in the Greek language* to Tertius his amanuensis (xvi. 22), and was sent to the church at Rome by Phœbe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea (xvi. 1), whose journey to Rome afforded Saint Paul an opportunity of writing to the Christians in that city. That he wrote from Corinth is further evident from Romans xvi. 23, where he sends salutations from Erastus the chamberlain of Corinth (which city, we learn from 2 Tim. iv. 20, was the place of his residence), and from Caius, who lived at Corinth (1 Cor. i. 14), whom Saint Paul terms "his host," and the host of all the Christian church there.

* Salmeron imagined that this epistle was written in Latin, but this notion is contradicted by the whole current of Christian antiquity; and John Adrian Bolten, a German critic, fancied that it was written in Syriac, but he was amply refuted by Griesbach. Viser, Herm. Sac. Nov. Test. pars ii. p. 354. Rosenmüller, Scholia, vol. iii. p. 359. That Greek was the original language, we have already proved in Vol. I. pp. 238—240 of this work.

II. That this Epistle has always been acknowledged to be a genuine and authentic production of Saint Paul, is attested not only by the antient Syriac and Latin versions, but by the express declarations and quotations of Irenæus *, Theophilus of Antioch †, Clement of Alexandria ‡, Tertullian §, Origen ||, and by all subsequent ecclesiastical writers. It was also cited or alluded to by the apostolic fathers **, Barnabas ††, Clement of Rome ‡‡, Ignatius §§, Polycarp |||, and by the churches of Vienne and Lyons ***.

III. The Scriptures do not inform us at what time or by whom the Gospel was first preached at Rome. Those who assert that the church in that city was founded by Saint Peter, can produce no solid foundation for their opinion: for if he had preached the Gospel there, it is not likely that such an event would have been left unnoticed in the Acts of the Apostles, where the labours of Peter are particularly related with those of Paul, which form the chief subject of that book. Nor is it probable that the author of this Epistle should have made no reference whatever to this circumstance, if it had been true. There is still less plausibility in the opinion, that the church was planted at Rome by the joint labours of Peter and Paul, for it is evident from Romans i. 8. that Paul had never been in that city previously to his writing this Epistle. As, however, the fame of this church had reached him long before he wrote the present letter (xv. 23), the most probable opinion is that of Dr. Benson, Michaelis, Rambach, Rosenmüller, and other critics, viz. that the Gospel was first preached there by some of those persons who heard Peter preach, and were converted at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost: for we learn from Acts ii. 10. that there were then at Jerusalem “strangers of Rome, Jews, and proselytes.” These Roman Jews, on their return home, doubtless preached Christ to their countrymen there †††, and probably converted some of

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 163—165; 4to, vol. i. pp. 368, 369.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 195—199; 4to, vol. i. pp. 385—388.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 222—224; 4to, vol. i. pp. 400—402.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 266—272; 4to, vol. i. pp. 424—428.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 375—377; 4to, vol. i. pp. 482—484.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 471—472; 4to, vol. i. p. 535.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 17, 18; 4to, vol. i. pp. 286, 287.

‡‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 35; 4to, vol. i. p. 296.

§§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 74; 4to, vol. i. p. 318.

||| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 94; 4to, vol. i. p. 329.

*** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 151; 4to, vol. i. p. 361.

††† At this time there were great numbers of Jews at Rome. Josephus relates that their number amounted to eight thousand (*Antiq. Jud. lib. xviii. c. 12*): and Dion Cassius (*lib. xxxvii. c. 17.*) informs us that they had obtained the privilege of living according to their own laws.

them: so that the church at Rome, like most of the churches in Gentile countries, was at first composed of Jews. But it was soon enlarged by converts from among the religious proselytes to Judaism, and in process of time was increased by the flowing in of the idolatrous Gentiles, who gave themselves to Christ in such numbers, that, at the time Saint Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, their conversion was much spoken of throughout the world (i. 8).

IV. The occasion of writing this Epistle may be easily collected from the Epistle itself. It appears that Saint Paul, who had been made acquainted with all the circumstances of the Christians at Rome by Aquila and Priscilla (Rom. xvi. 3), and by other Jews who had been expelled from Rome by the decree of Claudius (Acts xviii. 2), was very desirous of seeing them, that he might impart some spiritual gift*; but, being prevented from visiting them, as he had purposed, in his journey into Spain, he availed himself of the opportunity that presented itself to him by the departure of Phœbe to Rome†, to send them an Epistle. Finding, however, that the church was composed partly of Heathens who had embraced the Gospel, and partly of Jews who, with many remaining prejudices, believed in Jesus as the Messiah; and finding also that many contentions arose from the Gentile converts claiming equal privileges with the Hebrew Christians (which claims the latter absolutely refused to admit unless the Gentile converts were circumcised), he wrote this Epistle to compose these differences, and to strengthen the faith of the Roman Christians against the insinuations of false teachers; being apprehensive lest his involuntary absence from Rome should be turned by the latter to the prejudice of the Gospel.

V. In order fully to understand this Epistle, it is necessary that we should be acquainted with the tenets believed by those whose errors the apostle here exposes and confutes. It is clear that he wrote to persons, who had been either Gentiles or Jews, and that his grand design was to remove the prejudices entertained by both these descriptions of persons.

The greater part of the GENTILES, who lived in gross ignorance, did not trouble themselves much concerning the pardon of their sins, or the salvation of their souls; and the rest believed that their virtues deserved the favour of their gods, either in this world or in the next, if there were any thing to expect after death. They also thought that their vices or sins were

* Rom. i. 8—13. xv. 14. xvi. 19.

† Rom. xvi. 1, 2.

expiated by their virtues, especially if they were truly sorry for the crimes they had committed; for they declared a man to be innocent who repented of his fault. In order to expiate the most atrocious crimes, they had recourse to purifications and sacrifices, and sometimes offered human victims; but the wisest among them maintained that nothing was more fit to appease the Divinity than a change of life.

The JEWS, on the other hand, divided all mankind into three classes. The *first* was composed of righteous men whose righteousness exceeded their sins; the *second* comprized those whose righteousness was equal to their sins; and the *third* contained wicked men, whose sins were more in number than their good deeds. They thought, however, that there was no person so righteous as not to stand in need of pardon: but they believed that they should obtain it by repentance, by confession of their sins, almsgiving, by prayer, by the afflictions which God sent them, by their purifications, sacrifices, and change of life, and above all by the solemn sacrifice which was annually offered on the great day of atonement;—and if there yet remained any thing to be pardoned, every thing (they said) would be expiated by death. Further, the most zealous among the Jews entertained various erroneous opinions relative to their justification, to the election of their nation, and to the Roman government, which it is important to consider, as Saint Paul has refuted them at considerable length in this Epistle.

1. The Jews assigned three grounds of justification, by which they were delivered from the guilt and punishment of sin; viz.

(1.) *The extraordinary piety and merit of their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, and the covenant God made with them; for the sake of which piety, as He had promised to bless their posterity, they thought that this covenant obliged Him to forgive their sins.* This error is confuted by Saint Paul in the ninth chapter, where he shows that God's promises were made only to the faithful descendants of Abraham; and in the latter part of the fifth chapter, which confirms his assertion in chapter iii. 29, 30, that God was alike the God of the Jews and Gentiles; and that the covenant, broken by their common father Adam, should be restored to both by the common Head of the new covenant, Jesus Christ.

(2.) *Their knowledge of God through the law of God, and their diligence in the study of that law; which they estimated so highly as to make it a plea for the remission of their sins.* In opposition to this notion, Saint Paul proves, in the second

chapter, that man is justified, not by the knowledge, but by the observance of the law.

(3.) *The works of the Levitical law*, which were to expiate sin, especially circumcision and sacrifices; whence the Jews inferred that the Gentiles must receive the whole law of Moses, in order to be justified and saved—in other words, that there was no salvation out of the Jewish church. In opposition to this erroneous tenet, Saint Paul teaches that the Levitical law does not expiate, but only reveals sin; and that it exemplifies on the sacrificed beasts the punishment due to the sinner (iii. 20. v. 20).

2. The doctrine of the Jews concerning election was, that as God had promised Abraham that He would bless his seed, that He would give it not only the true spiritual blessing, but also the land of Canaan, and that He would suffer it to dwell there in prosperity, and consider it as his church upon earth;—therefore this blessing extended to their whole nation. They asserted that God was *bound* to fulfil these promises to every Jew, because he was a descendant of Abraham, whether he were righteous or wicked, faithful or unbelieving. They even believed that a prophet ought not to pronounce against their nation the prophecies with which he was inspired, but was bound to resist the will of God, by praying, like Moses, that his name might be expunged from the book of life. These Jewish errors illustrate that very difficult chapter (the ninth), and show that the question discussed by Saint Peter, relative to predestination and election, is totally different from that debated by Christians since the fourth century, and which now unhappily divides the Christian world.

3. It is well known that the Pharisees, at least those who were of the party of Judas the Gaulonite or Galilean,* cherished the most rooted aversion to foreign magistrates; and, from a false interpretation of Deut. xvii. 15, thought it unlawful to pay tribute to, or to acknowledge, the Roman emperor†. Expecting a Messiah who would establish a temporal kingdom, and liberate them from the dominion of the Romans‡, they were ripe for rebellion, and at all times ready to throw off the yoke. Even the Jews at Rome had already begun to create disturbances which occasioned the edict of Claudius,

* See a notice of this man, *supra*, vol. i. pp. 178, 179.

† Compare Matt. xxii. 15—22. with Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. xvii. c. 2. It was a maxim with the Jews, that *the world was given to the Israelites*; that they should have the supreme rule every where, and that the Gentiles should be their vassals.

‡ Josephus de Bell. Jud. lib. vii. c. 31. Suetonius in Vespasiano, c. 4. Tacitus, Hist. lib. ii. c. 5.

that all Jews should depart from Rome;* and as, in those early times, the Christians were generally confounded with the Jews, it is not unlikely that both were included in this decree. At this time also, the city of Rome contained within herself the seeds of insurrection and civil war. The senate was secretly jealous of the emperor, who in his turn suspected the senate. The life even of the emperor was seldom free from danger; and the succession to the throne, after the death of Claudius, was purchased by largesses to the imperial guard. With the political notions cherished by the Jews, it is no wonder that they, in several instances, gave cause of suspicion to the Roman government, who would be glad of an opportunity to expel from the city persons who were considered dangerous to its peace and security: nor is it improbable, on this account, that the Christians, under an idea of being the *peculiar people of God*, and the subjects of his kingdom alone, might be in danger of being infected with those unruly and rebellious sentiments. Under these circumstances, therefore, Saint Paul judged it necessary to exhort the Roman Christians to submit peaceably to the government under which they lived. He tells them, that the 'powers that be' (Rom. xiii. 1), or the constituted authorities, 'are ordained of God,' and forbids them to meddle with those who endeavoured to effect a change in the government†. The reigning emperor at this time was that monster of iniquity Nero.

The preceding view of the tenets held by the Heathens and Jews of Rome will enable us to ascertain the scope or design of Saint Paul in writing this epistle, which was to confute the unbelieving; to instruct the believing Jew; to confirm the Christian, and to convert the idolatrous Gentile; and to place the Gentile convert upon an equality with the Jewish in respect of his religious condition, and his rank in the divine favour. These several designs he reduces to one scheme, by opposing or arguing with the infidel or unbelieving Jew, in favour of the Christian or believing Gentile. "Upon this plan, if the unbelieving Jew escaped and remained unconvinced, yet the Christian Jew would be more inoffensively and more effectually instructed in the nature of the Gospel, and the kind brotherly regards he ought to have for the believing Gentiles, than if he had directed his discourse immediately and plainly to him. But, if his argument should fail in reference to the

* Acts xviii. 2. Suetonius, in Claudiano, c. 25.

† Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 89—102. Dr. J. Taylor on Rom. xiii. 1.

believing Jew, yet the believing Gentile would see his interest in the covenant and kingdom of God as solidly established by a full confutation of Jewish objections, (which were the only objections that could with any show of reason be advanced against it,) as if the Epistle had been written for no other purpose. *And thus it is of the greatest use to us at this day.* It is also at present exceedingly useful, as it entirely demolishes the engrossing pretensions and imposing principles of the church of Rome; for a professed *faith in Christ*, and a subjection to Him, are in this Epistle fully shown to be the only Gospel condition of a place in his church, an interest in the covenant of God, and of Christian fellowship. By this extensive principle God broke down the pales of his own antient enclosure, the Jewish church; and therefore, by the same principle, more strongly forbids the building of any other partition-wall of schemes and terms of Christian fellowship *."

VII. This Epistle consists of four parts, viz.

PART 1. The introduction (ch. i. 1—13).

PART 2. contains the doctrinal part of the Epistle concerning justification (i. 16—32. ii—xi.); in which we have,

i. The proposition concerning the extent of the Gospel (i. 16.) †

* Dr. J. Taylor's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, p. clxii.

† Michaelis has given a more logical view of the argumentative part of the Epistle to the Romans, of which the following abstract may not be unacceptable to the reader. The point, he observes, which Saint Paul intended to prove, was, that the Gospel reveals a righteousness unknown before, and to which both Jews and Gentiles have an equal claim (Rom. i. 15, 16). In order to prove this, he shows (i. 18.—iii. 20.) that both Jews and Gentiles are "under sin," i. e. that God will impute their sins to Jews as well as Gentiles.

His arguments may be reduced to these syllogisms (ii. 1. 17—24). "The wrath of God is revealed against those who hold the truth in unrighteousness; i. e. who acknowledge the truth, and yet sin against it.

"The Gentiles acknowledged truths; but, partly by their idolatry, and partly by their other detestable vices, they sinned against the truth they acknowledged.

"Therefore the wrath of God is revealed against the Gentiles, and punishes them.

"The Jews have acknowledged more truths than the Gentiles, and yet they sin.

"Consequently the Jewish sinners are yet more exposed to the wrath of God (ii. 1—12).

Having thus proved his point, he answers certain objections to it.

OBJECTION I. "The Jews were well grounded in their knowledge, and studied the law." He answers, if the knowledge of the law, without observing it, could justify them, then God could not have condemned the Gentiles, who knew the law by nature (ii. 13—16).

OBJECTION II. "The Jews were circumcised." ANSWER. That is, ye are admitted by an outward sign into the covenant with God. This sign will not avail you when ye violate that covenant (ii. 25—end).

OBJECTION III. "According to this doctrine of Saint Paul, the Jews have no advantage before others." ANSWER. Yes, they still have advantages; for unto them are committed the oracles of God. But their privileges do not extend to this, that God should overlook their sins, which, on the contrary, Scripture condemns even in Jews (iii. 1—19).

ii. The demonstration of that proposition (i. 17), in which it is shown that justification is to be attained,

Not by works, (i. 18).

For the Gentiles (i. 19—32),

The Jews (ii. iii. 1—18),

And both together (iii. 19, 20.) are under sin.

OBJECTION IV. "They had the Levitical law and sacrifices." ANSWER. From hence is no remission, but only the knowledge of sin (iii. 20).

From all this Saint Paul concludes, that Jews and Gentiles may be justified by the same means, namely, without the Levitical law, through faith in Christ: and in opposition to the imaginary advantages of the Jews, he states the declaration of Zechariah, that God is the God of the Gentiles as well as the Jews (iii. 21—end).

As the whole blessing was promised to the faithful descendants of Abraham, whom both Scripture and the Jews call his children, he proves his former assertion from the example of Abraham; who was an idolater before his call, but was declared just by God, on account of his faith, long before his circumcision. Hence he takes occasion to explain the nature and fruits of faith (iv. 1—v. 11).

He goes on to prove from God's justice that the Jews had no advantages over the Gentiles, with respect to justification. Both Jews and Gentiles had forfeited life and immortality, by the means of one common father of their race, whom they themselves had not chosen. Now, as God was willing to restore immortality by a new spiritual head of a covenant, viz. Christ, it was just that both Jews and Gentiles should share in this new representative of the whole race (v. 12—end.)—Chap. v. ver. 15, 16, amount to this negative question, "Is it not fitting that the free gift should extend as far as the offence?"

He shows that the doctrine of justification, as stated by him, lays us under the strongest obligations to holiness (vi. 1—end); and that the law of Moses no longer concerns us at all; for our justification arises from our appearing in God's sight, as if actually dead with Christ, on account of our sins; but the law of Moses was not given to the dead. On this occasion he proves at large, that the eternal power of God over us is not affected by this, and that whilst we are under the law of Moses we perpetually become subject to death, even by sins of inadvertency (vii. 1—end). Hence he concludes, that all those, and those only, who are united with Christ, and for the sake of his union do not live according to the flesh, are free from all condemnation of the law, and have an undoubted share in eternal life (viii. 1—17).

Having described their blessedness, he is aware that the Jews, who expected a temporal happiness, would object to him, that Christians notwithstanding endure much suffering in this world. He answers this objection at large (viii. 18—end); and shows that God is not the less true and faithful because he does not justify, but rather rejects and punishes, those Jews who would not believe the Messiah (ix. x. xi).

In discussing this point, we may observe the cautious manner in which, on account of the Jewish prejudices, he introduces it (ix. 1—5), as well as in the discussion itself. He shows that the promises of God were never made to all the posterity of Abraham; and that God always reserved to himself the power of choosing those sons of Abraham, whom for Abraham's sake he intended to bless, and of punishing the wicked sons of Abraham; and that, with respect to temporal happiness or misery, he was not even determined in his choice by their works. Thus he rejected Ishmael, Esau, the Israelites in the Desert in the time of Moses, and the greater part of that people in the time of Isaiah, making them a sacrifice to his justice (ix. 6—29). He then proceeds to show that God had reason to reject most of the Jews then living, because they would not believe in the Messiah, though the Gospel had been preached to them plainly enough (ix. 33—x. end). However, that God had not rejected all his people, but was still fulfilling his promise upon many thousand natural descendants of Abraham, who believed in the Messiah; and would in a future period fulfil them upon more; for that all Israel would be converted (xi. 1—32). And he concludes with admiring the wise counsels of God (33—end). Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 102—107.

- (2). *But by faith*, in which it is shown That we are justified by faith *alone* (iii. 21—31). As appears by the example of Abraham and the testimony of David (iv.); And the privileges and blessings of Abraham's seed by faith are shown to be far greater than those which belonged to his seed by natural descent (as described in Rom. ii. 17—20). These privileges of true believers in Christ are, 1. *Peace with God* (v. i); 2. *Joy in hope of the glory of God* (2), which tribulation cannot prevent, but rather promotes (3—10); 3. *Rejoicing in God* himself as reconciled to us through Christ, which however affords no countenance to sin, but requires evangelical obedience to God (11—21), whence flows 4. *Mortification of sin, and newness of life*, as another evidence and effect of justification (vi.); 5. *The freedom of justified persons* from the malediction of the law, and its irritation to sin (vii); 6. Freedom from condemnation, and ultimate glorification (viii).

iii. Concerning the equal privileges of Jewish and Christian believers (ix—xi), in which the apostle, after expressing his affectionate esteem for the Jewish nation (ix. 1—5), proceeds to show.

- (1). That God's rejection of great part of the seed of Abraham, and also of Isaac, was an undeniable fact (ix. 6—13).
- (2). That God had not chosen them (the Jews) to such peculiar privileges, for any kind of goodness either in themselves or their fathers (14—24).
- (3). That his acceptance of the Gentiles, and rejection of many of the Jews, had been predicted both by Hosea and Isaiah (25—33).
- (4). That, God had offered salvation to both Jews and Gentiles on the same terms, though the Jews rejected it (x. 1—21).
- (5). That, though the Israelites were rejected for their obstinacy, yet that rejection was not total; there still being a remnant among them who did embrace and believe the Gospel (xi. 1—10).
- (6). That the rejection of the rest was not final, but in the end "all Israel should be saved" (11—31).
- (7). And that, in the mean time, even their obstinacy and rejection served to display the unsearchable wisdom and love of God (32—36).

PART 3. comprizes the hortatory or practical part of the Epistle (xii—xv. 1—14), in which the apostle exhorts Christian believers.

- i. To dedicate themselves to God, and to demean themselves as fellow-members of Christ's body (xii. 1—8).
- ii. To Christian love and charity (xiii. 9—21).
- iii. To obedience to the constituted authorities (xiii. 1—7), and the exercise of mutual love (8—14).
- iv. How those who are strong in faith should conduct themselves towards their weak brethren (xiv. xv. 1—13).

PART 4. The conclusion, in which Saint Paul excuses himself partly for his boldness in thus writing to the Romans (xv. 14—21), and partly for not having hitherto come to them (22), but promises to visit them, recommending himself to their prayers (23—33); and sends various salutations to the brethren at Rome (xvi).

VIII. In perusing this epistle, it will be desirable to read, at least, the eleven first chapters *at once*, uninterruptedly; as every sentence, especially in the argumentative part, bears an intimate relation to, and is dependent upon the whole discourse, and cannot be understood unless we comprehend the scope of the whole. Further, in order to enter fully into its spirit, we must enter into the spirit of a Jew in those times, and endeavour to realize in our own minds his utter aversion from the Gentiles, his valuing and exalting himself upon his relation to God and to Abraham, and also upon his law, pompous worship, circumcision, &c. as if the Jews were the only people in the world who had any right to the favour of God. Attention to this circumstance will show the beauties of the apostle's style and argument, and that this Epistle is indeed "a writing which, for sublimity and truth of sentiment, for brevity and strength of expression, for regularity in its structure, but, above all, for the unspeakable importance of the discoveries which it contains, stands unrivalled by any mere human composition; and as far exceeds the most celebrated writings of the Greeks and Romans, as the shining of the sun exceeds the twinkling of the stars." *

* Macknight on the Epistles, vol. i. p. 407. 4to edit.

SECTION IV.

ON THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

I. *Account of the city of Corinth, before the planting of Christianity there*; — II. *State of the Corinthian church*; — III. *Occasion of this Epistle*; — IV. *Its scope and analysis*; — V. *Date and genuineness*; — VI. *Examination of the question, how many Epistles Saint Paul wrote to the Corinthians?*

I. CORINTH, the metropolis of Achaia Proper, and the ornament of Greece, was situated on an isthmus between the Ægean and Ionian seas. From the convenience of its situation for commerce, it abounded in riches, and was furnished with all the accommodations, elegancies, and superfluities of life. In the Achæan war, it was destroyed by the Romans under the consul Memmius, about 146 years before the Christian æra, and was rebuilt about one hundred years afterwards by Julius Cæsar, who planted a Roman colony here, and made this city the residence of the proconsul of Achaia. Favoured by its situation between two seas, the new city soon regained its antient splendour: commerce produced an influx of riches, and the luxury and voluptuousness which followed in consequence, corrupted the manners of its inhabitants, who became infamous to a proverb. In the vicinity of this city were celebrated the Isthmian games, to which Saint Paul alludes in different parts of his Epistles. Corinth also possessed numerous schools, in which philosophy and rhetoric were taught by able masters, and strangers resorted thither from all quarters to be instructed in the sciences. The number of sophists in particular was very great. The knowledge of these circumstances affords a key to Saint Paul's exhortations against fornication, lasciviousness, and covetousness (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10), and also his defence of the Christian doctrine against the sophists, to whom the fathers attribute all the strifes and contentions that sprang up in this church.

II. Christianity was first planted at Corinth by Saint Paul himself, who resided here a year and six months, between the years 51 and 53. The church consisted partly of Jews, and partly of Gentiles, but chiefly of the latter; whence the apostle had to combat, sometimes with Jewish superstition, and sometimes with Heathen licentiousness. On Saint Paul's departure from Corinth, he was succeeded by Apollos, "an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures," who preached

the Gospel with great success (Acts xviii. 24—28). Aquila and Sosthenes were also eminent teachers in this church (xviii. 3. 1 Cor. i. 1). But, shortly after Saint Paul quitted this church, its peace was disturbed by the intrusion of false teachers, who made great pretensions to eloquence, wisdom, and knowledge of their Christian liberty, and thus undermined his influence, and the credit of his ministry. Hence two parties were formed, one of which contended strenuously for the observance of Jewish ceremonies, while the other, misinterpreting the true nature of Christian liberty, indulged in excesses which were contrary to the design and spirit of the Gospel.

III. The occasion, on which this epistle was written, appears from its whole tenor to have been twofold, viz.

First, The information which the apostle had received from some members of the family of Chloe, while he was at Ephesus, concerning the disorders that prevailed in the church at Corinth;—such as, 1. *Schisms and divisions* (1 Cor. 11. *et seq.*); 2. *Many notorious scandals*, as the prevalence of impurity, incest, covetousness, law-suits of Christians before Pagan magistrates v. vi.);—3. *Idolatrous communion* with the Heathens at their idol feasts (viii. x);—4. *Want of decorum and order* in their public worship (xi. 2—16. xiv);—5. *Gross profanation* of the Lord's supper (xi. 17—34); and, 6. *The denial of the resurrection and eternal life* (xv. 12. *et seq.*)

The *second* cause of Saint Paul's writing this Epistle was, his receiving a letter from the church at Corinth, by the hands of Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (xvi. 12. 17. vii. 1), in which the Corinthian Christians requested his advice concerning some particular cases; as, 1. Concerning *marriage* (vii. 1. *et seq.*);—2. *Things sacrificed to idols* (viii); 3. *Spiritual gifts* (xii); 4. *Propheying*, or teaching and instructing others (xiv); and, 5. Concerning the making of *charitable collections* for the poor brethren in Judea (xvi. 1. *et seq.*)

Hence we learn that Saint Paul maintained a constant intercourse with the churches which he had planted, and was acquainted with all their circumstances. They seem to have applied to him for advice in those difficult cases, which their own understanding could not solve; and he was ready on all occasions to correct their mistakes.

IV. The scope of this epistle, therefore, is conformable to the circumstances that caused the apostle to write it, and in like manner is twofold; viz. 1. To apply suitable remedies to the disorders and abuses which had crept into the church at

Corinth; and, 2. To give the Corinthians satisfactory answers on all those points concerning which they had requested his advice and information. The Epistle, accordingly, divides itself into three parts.

PART 1. The Introduction (i. 1—9), in which Saint Paul expresses his satisfaction at all the good he knew of them, particularly at their having received the gifts of the Holy Spirit for the confirmation of the Gospel.

PART 2. contains the treatise or discussion of various particulars adapted to the state of the Corinthian church; which may be commodiously arranged into two sections.

SECT. 1. contains a reproof of the corruptions and abuses which disgraced the church.

§ 1. The apostle rebukes the sectaries among them, and defends himself against one or more Corinthian teachers, who had alienated most of the Corinthians from him; and adds many weighty arguments to reunite them in affection to himself, as having first planted the Gospel among them (i. 10—31. ii—iv).

§ ii. A reproof for not excommunicating an incestuous person, who had married his own stepmother (v).

§ 3. A reproof of their covetous and litigious temper, which caused them to prosecute their Christian brethren before Heathen courts of judicature (vi. 1—9).

§ 4. A dissuasive from fornication — a sin to which they had been extremely addicted before they were converted, and which some of the Corinthians appear to have considered an indifferent matter. The enormity of this sin is very strongly represented (vi. 10—20).

SECT. 2. contains an answer to the questions which the Corinthian church had proposed to the apostle.

§ i. Directions concerning matrimony (vii. 1—16), the celibacy of virgins (25—38), and widows (39, 40); in which Saint Paul takes occasion to show that Christianity makes no alteration in the civil conditions of men, but leaves them under the same obligations that they were before their conversion (17—24).

§ ii. Concerning the lawfulness of eating things sacrificed to idols, showing when they may, and when they may not, be lawfully eaten (viii—xi. 1).

§ iii. Saint Paul answers a third query concerning the manner in which women should deliver any thing in public, when called to it by a divine impulse. He particularly censures the unusual dress of both sexes in prophesying,

which exposed them to the contempt of the Greeks, among whom the men usually went uncovered, while the women were veiled (xi. 2—17).

§ iv. A reproof of their irregularities, when celebrating the Lord's supper, with directions for receiving it worthily (xi. 17—34).

§ v. Instructions concerning the desiring and exercising of spiritual gifts (xii—xiv).

§ vi. The certainty of the resurrection of the dead defended against the false teacher or teachers (xv).

PART 3. contains the conclusion, comprizing directions relative to the contributions for the saints at Jerusalem *, promises that the apostle would shortly visit them, and salutations to various members of the church at Corinth (xvi).

V. Although the subscription to this Epistle purports that it was written at Philippi, yet, as this directly contradicts Saint Paul's own declaration in xvi. 8, we must look to the Epistle itself for notes of time, that may enable us to ascertain its date. We have seen † that Saint Paul, on his departure from Corinth, went into Asia, and visited Ephesus, Jerusalem, and Antioch; after which, passing through Galatia and Phrygia, he returned to Ephesus, where he remained three years (Acts xvii. 18—23. xix. 1. xx. 31). At the close of his residence at Ephesus, Saint Paul wrote this Epistle, as appears from 1 Cor. xvi. 8, where he says, "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost;" and that it was written at the preceding Easter, is further evident from verse 7. where the apostle uses this expression, "ye are unleavened"—that is, ye are now celebrating the feast of unleavened bread. Now, as Saint Paul's departure from Ephesus, after residing there three years, took place about the year of Christ 57, it follows that the first Epistle to the Corinthians was written about that time ‡.

* The Jews, who lived out of Palestine, were chiefly engaged in trade, and were generally in more affluent circumstances than those who resided in Judea, to whom they usually sent an annual relief (Vitranga de Syn. Vet. lib. iii. p. i. c. 13). Now, as the Gentile Christians became brethren to the Jews, and partook of their spiritual riches, Saint Paul thought it equitable that the Greek Christians should contribute to the support of their poorer brethren in Judea (Rom. xv. 26, 27). When he was at Jerusalem, he had promised Peter and James that he would collect alms for this purpose (Gal. ii. 10); and accordingly we find (1 Cor. xvi. 1—4) that he made a collection among the Christians at Corinth. Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 61.

† See p. 488 *supra*. Michaelis is of opinion that the mistake in the subscription arose from misunderstanding *διερχομαι* (xvi. 5.) to mean, I am now travelling through, instead of "my route is through Macedonia," which it evidently means. Vol. iv. p. 43.

‡ Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 42. Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, p. 96. Mill, Whitby, Michaelis, Benson, and almost all modern commentators and critics, agree in the above date.

The genuineness of Saint Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians was never doubted. It was cited or alluded to repeatedly by Clement of Rome * Ignatius †, and Polycarp ‡, in the first century. In the following century, it was cited by Tatian §, Irenæus ||, Athenagoras **, and Clement of Alexandria ††. In the third century, this Epistle was acknowledged to be Saint Paul's by Tertullian ‡‡, Caius §§, and Origen |||. The testimonies of later writers are too numerous and explicit to render any detail of them necessary.

VI. An important question has been much agitated, and is to this day undecided, viz. Whether Saint Paul wrote any other Epistles to the Corinthians besides those we now have. In 1 Cor. v. 9. the following words occur—*Ἐγραψα υμῖν ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ*, which in our version is rendered—*I have written to you in an Epistle*. From this text it has been inferred, that Saint Paul had already written to the Corinthians an Epistle which is no longer extant, and to which he alludes; while others contend, that by *τῇ ἐπιστολῇ* he means only the Epistle which he is writing. The former opinion is advocated by Calvin, Beza, Grotius, Cappel, Witsius, Le Clerc, Heinsius, Mill, Wetstein, Beausobre, Bishop Pearce, Dr. Doddridge, Mr. Scott, Michaelis, Storr, Rosenmüller, and Schleusner; and the latter opinion, after Chrysostom, Theodoret, and other fathers, is defended by Fabricius, Glassius, Calmet, Dr. Whitby, Stosch, Jer. Jones, Drs. Edwards, Lardner, and Macknight, Purver, Archbishop Newcome, Bishop Tomline (whose words are adopted by Dr. Mant and Mr. D'Oyley), and Bishop Middleton. A third opinion is that of Dr. Benson, which is acceded to by Dr. A. Clarke, viz. that Saint Paul refers to an Epistle which he had written, or begun to write, but had not sent; for, on receiving further information from Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, he suppressed that, and wrote this, in which he considers the subject more at large.

To the first hypothesis above stated, which supposes that Saint Paul wrote a former letter which is now lost, there is this formidable objection, that no such Epistle was ever cited by

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 36; 4to, vol. i. p. 297.

+ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 74, 75; 4to, vol. i. pp. 318, 319.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 91, 94; 4to, vol. i. pp. 327, 329.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 140; 4to, vol. i. p. 355.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 163; 4to, vol. i. p. 368.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 185; 4to, vol. i. p. 380.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 222; 4to, vol. i. p. 401.

‡‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 263; 4to, vol. i. p. 423.

§§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 374, 375; 4to, vol. i. pp. 482, 483.

||| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 471; 4to, vol. ii. p. 535.

any antient writer, nor has any one even alluded to its existence, though both the received Epistles are perpetually quoted by the fathers from the earliest period. To which we may add, that the reverence of the first professors of Christianity for the sacred writings, and their care for their preservation, were so great, as to render it extremely improbable that a canonical book should be lost. From the hypothesis of Dr. Benson the praise of ingenuity cannot be withheld; but as it is a mere conjecture, unsupported by facts, we are disposed to accede to the opinion of Fabricius and others, that this first Epistle to the Corinthians, and no other, was intended by the apostle. The grounds on which this opinion rests are as follow.

1. The expression τῇ ἐπιστολῇ does not mean *an* Epistle, but that which Saint Paul is writing. Thus Tertius, who was Saint Paul's amanuensis, speaking of the Epistle to the Romans, says—“I Tertius, who wrote *this* Epistle (τὴν ἐπιστολὴν) salute you” (Rom. xvi. 22). Similar expressions occur in Col. iv. 16, 1 Thess. v. 27., and 2 Thess. iii. 14.

2. With regard to the word ἐγραψα, *I wrote*, some commentators refer it to what the apostle had said in verses 5 and 6 of this chapter; but Dr. Edwards (and after him Lardner) considers it as anticipative of what the apostle will be found to have written in subsequent parts of this epistle, viz. in vi. 13, again in v. 18, and also in vii. 2. It is probable therefore that Saint Paul, on reading over this letter after he had finished it, might add the expression in verse 9, and take notice of what he says afterwards—“*I have* (says he) *written to you in this epistle,*” viz. in some of the following chapters, against fornication, and joining yourselves to persons addicted to that sin.

3. The word ἐγραψα, however, is not necessarily to be understood in the past tense. There are nearly one hundred instances in the New Testament in which the past is put for the present tense. Thus, in John iv. our Saviour, speaking of the mission of the apostle, says, ἀπεστείλα, *I sent you*, though it had not yet taken place. A more material example occurs in a subsequent chapter of this very Epistle (ix. 15), where Saint Paul uses ἐγραψα in the sense of γράφω, *I write*—Neither (says he) *have I written these things*, that is, at this time, in this Epistle which I am now writing. In the passage now under consideration, therefore, the expression, ἐγραψα ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, is equivalent to γράφω ὑμῖν, *I write unto you in this Epistle, not to associate with fornicators*: and that this view of the passage is correct, is evident from v. 11 of this chapter, which is only a repetition of v. 9; νῦν δὲ ἐγραψα, *Now I write unto you*. The adverb νῦν, *now*, shows that it is spoken of the present

time, though the verb be in the past tense. The following, then, is the plain sense of the text and context.—“*I write unto you,*” says the apostle, “*in this my letter, not to associate (literally be mingled) with the fornicators, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then indeed ye must go out of the world (renounce all worldly business whatever, there being so great a multitude of them). But I mean this—that ye should avoid the company of a brother (that is, a professed Christian), if he be given to fornication, covetousness, or idolatry. This is the thing which I at this time write unto you.*”

Putting all the circumstances together, we conclude that the *internal* evidence seems to be unfavourable to the hypothesis, that a letter to the Corinthians had preceded that which Saint Paul was now writing. The *external* evidence is decidedly against such hypothesis. Upon the whole, therefore, we have no doubt that the two Epistles still preserved are the only Epistles which Saint Paul ever addressed to the Corinthians*.

* Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 62—68. Ferdinandi Stosch, ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΟΛΟΚΛΗΡΟΝ, sive Tractatus Theologicus de Epistolis Apostolorum non deperditis, pp. 75—94. (Groningen, 12mo, 1753). Rosenmüller, Scholia in N. T. tom. iv. pp. 71, 72. Bishop Middleton on the Greek Article, pp. 469—474. Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 668—671; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 468, 469. Dr. John Edwards on the Authority, &c. of Scripture, vol. iii. pp. 467—469. Dr. Storr, Opuscula Academica, vol. ii. p. 279. The whole of his Dissertation, entitled *Notitiæ Historiæ Epistolarum Pauli ad Corinthios Interpretationi servientes*, is particularly worthy of perusal, as it illustrates a great number of circumstances which are either mentioned or incidentally alluded to in the two epistles to the Corinthians. Ibid. pp. 242—366.

SECTION V.

ON THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

- I. *Date, and where written*;—II. *Occasion of this Epistle*;—
 III. *Scope*;—IV. *Synopsis*;—V. *Observations on this Epistle*;—
 VI. *A supposed chronological difficulty elucidated.*

I. THE preceding Epistle, we have seen, was written from Ephesus about the year 57, before Saint Paul's departure from that city. On quitting Ephesus he went to Troas, which place was situated on the shore of the Ægean sea, in expectation of meeting Titus, and receiving an account of the success with which (he hoped) his former Epistle had been attended, and of the present state of the Corinthian church (2 Cor. ii. 12).

But not meeting him there (13), Paul proceeded to Macedonia, where he obtained the desired interview, and received satisfactory information concerning the promising state of affairs at Corinth (vii. 5). From this country, and probably from Philippi (as the subscription imports), the apostle wrote this second letter (2 Cor. viii. 1—14. ix. 1—5); which he sent by Titus and his associates, who were commissioned to hasten and finish the contribution among the Christians at Corinth, for the use of their poor brethren in Judea (ix. 2—4). From these historical circumstances, it is generally agreed that this Epistle was written within a year after the former, that is, early in A. D. 58. The genuineness of this epistle was never doubted; and as it is cited or referred to by nearly the same antient writers, whose testimonies to the first Epistle we have already given *, it is not necessary to repeat them in this place.

II. The first Epistle to the Corinthians produced very different effects among them. Many amended their conduct, most of them showed strong marks of repentance, and evinced such respect for the apostle that they excommunicated the incestuous person (2 Cor. ii. 5—11. vii. 11); requested the apostle's return with tears (vii. 7); and became zealous for him—that is, they vindicated the apostle and his office against the false teacher and his adherents (vii. 7—11). Others, however, of the Corinthians adhered to the false teacher, expressly denied his apostolical ministry, and even furnished themselves with arguments which they pretended to draw from his first Epistle. He had formerly intimated his intention of taking a journey from Ephesus to Corinth, thence to visit the Macedonian churches, and from them to return to Corinth (2 Cor. i. 15, 16); but the unhappy state of the Corinthian church led him to alter his intention, since he found he must have treated them with severity, had he visited them (23). Hence his adversaries charged him, 1. With *levity* and irresolution of conduct (2 Cor. i. 18), and therefore he could not be a prophet; 2. With *pride and tyrannical severity* on account of his treatment of the incestuous person; 3. With *arrogance and vain-glory* in his ministry, therein lessening the authority of the law; and, 4. With being *personally contemptible*, intimating, that however weighty he might be in his letters, yet in person he was base and despicable (2 Cor. x. 10). Such were the principal circumstances that gave occasion to this second Epistle to the Corinthians, to

* See p. 518 *supra*.

which we may add their forwardness in the contribution for the poor saints in Judea and their kind and benevolent reception of Titus.

III. Agreeably to these circumstances the scope of this Epistle is, chiefly, 1. *To account for his not having come to them as soon as he had promised*, viz. not out of levity, but partly in consequence of his sufferings in Asia, which prevented him (2 Cor. i. 8—11), and partly that he might give them more time to set their church in better order, so that he might come to them with greater comfort (ii. 3, 4). 2. To declare that his sentence against the incestuous person was neither rigid nor tyrannical (ii. 5—11), but necessary and pious; and now, as excommunication had produced so good an effect upon that offender, the apostle, commending the obedience of the Corinthians, exhorts them to absolve him from that sentence and to restore him to communion with the church.—3. *To intimate his great success in preaching the Gospel*, which he does not for his own glory, but for the glory of the Gospel, which had peculiar efficacy upon the Corinthians above others (2 Cor. iii), and far surpassed the ministry of Moses (iv), and was under a veil only to those who were perishing. In preaching which Gospel he used all diligence and faithfulness, notwithstanding all his afflictions for the Gospel; which afflictions, far from reflecting disgrace upon the Gospel or its ministers, prepared for him a far greater glory in heaven (v) to which he aspired, inviting others to do the same, by accepting the grace of reconciliation tendered in the Gospel.—4. *To stir them up to lead a holy life*, and particularly to avoid communion with idolaters. 5. *To excite them to finish their contributions for their poor brethren in Judea* (viii. ix). 6. Lastly, *to apologize for himself* against the personal contemptibleness imputed to him by the false teacher and his adherents (x.—xiii). In the course of this apology, he reproves their vain glory, and enters upon a high commendation of his apostolic office and power, and his extraordinary revelations which far outshone the counterfeit glory of the false teacher; but at the same time declares that he had rather use meekness than exert his power, unless he should be forced to do it by their contumacy and impenitence.

IV. This Epistle consists of three parts, viz.

PART 1. The introduction, (i. 1, 2.)

PART 2. The apologetic discourse of Saint Paul, in which,

SECTION 1. He justifies himself from the imputations of the false teacher and his adherents, by showing his sincerity and integrity in the discharge of his ministry; and that he acted

not from worldly interest, but from true love for them, and a tender concern for their spiritual welfare (i. 3—24. ii—vii).

SECTION. 2. He exhorts them to a liberal contribution for their poor brethren in Judea (viii. ix).

SECTION 3. He resumes his apology; justifying himself from the charges and insinuations of the false teacher and his followers; in order to detach the Corinthians from them, and to re-establish himself and his authority (x—xiii. 10).

PART 3. The conclusion (xiii. 11—14).

V. “The most remarkable circumstance in this Epistle is, the confidence of the apostle in the goodness of his cause, and in the power of God to bear him out in it. Opposed as he then was by a powerful and sagacious party, whose authority, reputation, and interest were deeply concerned, and who were ready to seize on every thing that could discredit him, it is wonderful to hear him so firmly insist upon his apostolical authority, and so unreservedly appeal to the miraculous powers which he had exercised and conferred at Corinth. So far from shrinking from the contest, as afraid of some discovery being made, unavourable to himself or to the common cause, he, with great modesty and meekness indeed, but with equal boldness and decision, expressly declares that his opposers and despisers were the ministers of Satan, and menaces them with miraculous judgments, when as many of their deluded hearers had been brought to repentance, and re-established in the faith, as proper means could in a reasonable time effect. It is inconceivable that a stronger internal testimony, not only of integrity, but of divine inspiration, can exist. Had there been any thing of imposture among the Christians, it was next to impossible, but such a conduct must have occasioned a disclosure of it *.”

Of the effects produced by this second Epistle, we have no circumstantial accounts; for Saint Luke has only briefly noticed (in Acts xx. 2, 3.) Saint Paul's second journey to Corinth, after he had written this Epistle. We know, however, that he was there, and that the contributions were brought to him in that city for the poor brethren at Jerusalem (Rom. xv. 26); and that, staying there several months, he sent salutations from some of the principal members of that church to the Romans (xvi. 22, 23). “From this time we hear no more of the false teacher and his party; and when Clement of Rome wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians, Saint Paul was

* Scott's Pref. to 1 Cor.

considered by them as a divine apostle, to whose authority he might appeal without fear of contradiction. The false teacher therefore must either have been silenced by Saint Paul, in virtue of his apostolical powers, and by an act of severity which he had threatened (2 Cor. xiii. 2, 3); or this adversary of the apostle must have quitted the place. Whichever was the cause, the effect produced must operate as a confirmation of our faith, and as a proof of Saint Paul's divine mission *."

VI. A considerable chronological difficulty occurs in 2 Cor. xii. 14. and xiii. 1, 2. in which passages the apostle mentions his design of visiting Corinth a *third* time; whereas only *one* visit before the date of this Epistle is noticed in the Acts (xviii. 1), about A. D. 51, and the next time that he visited Greece (xx. 2), about A. D. 57, no mention is made of his going to Corinth. And indeed, for the reasons already stated, he purposely avoided that city. It has been conjectured by Grotius, and Drs. Hammond and Paley, that his first Epistle virtually supplied the place of his presence, and that it is so represented by the apostle in a corresponding passage (1 Cor. v. 3). Admitting this solution to be probable, it is however far-fetched, and is not satisfactory as a matter of fact. Michaelis has produced another, more simple and natural, viz. that Paul, on his return from Crete, visited Corinth a second time before he went to winter at Nicopolis. This second visit is unnoticed in the Acts, because the voyage itself is unnoticed †. The *third* visit promised in 2 Cor. xii. 14. and xiii. 1, 2. was actually paid on the apostle's second return to Rome, when he took Corinth in his way (2 Tim. iv. 20). "Thus critically does the book of the Acts harmonize, even in its omissions, with the Epistles; and these with each other in the minute *incidental* circumstance of the third visit ‡."

* Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 74.

† Introd. vol. iv. p. 37.

‡ Dr. Hales's Chronology, vol. ii. book ii. p. 1123.

SECTION VI.

ON THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

I. *Account of Galatia*;—II. *Date*;—III. *Genuineness and authenticity of this Epistle*;—IV. *Its occasion and scope*;—V. *Synopsis of its contents*;—VI. *Observations on this Epistle*.

I. THE Galatians were the descendants of those Gauls who, finding their own country too small to support its redundant population, emigrated from it after the death of Alexander the Great, B. C. 278. On leaving Gaul, they proceeded eastward along the Danube to its junction with the Saave; when, dividing themselves into three bodies, under the conduct of different leaders, one entered Pannonia, another penetrated into Thrace, and a third into Illyricum and Macedonia. The party which marched into Thrace passed over the Bosphorus into Asia Minor, and, hiring themselves to Nicomedes king of Bithynia, assisted him to subdue his brother Zipetes, with whom he was then at war; and, in reward for that service, they received from him a large province, situate between Bithynia and Cappadocia, where they established themselves, B. C. 277. Their descendants becoming blended with the Greek inhabitants of the country, this region was afterwards called Gallo-Græcia, and its inhabitants Gallo-Greeks *. During the reign of Augustus (A. U. C. 529. B. C. 26), Galatia was reduced into a Roman province, and was thenceforth governed by the Roman laws, under the administration of a pro-prætor.

Christianity was very early planted in Galatia by Saint Paul himself †, and it appears from the Acts of the Apostles that he visited the churches in this country more than once. Two distinct visits are clearly marked, viz. the first, about the year 50 (Acts xvi. 6), and the second about the year 54 or 55 (xviii. 23).

II. There is great diversity of opinion among learned men concerning the date of Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. Michaelis supposes it to have been written so early as the year 49; Cappel, in 51; Bishop Pearson, in 57; Mill, Fabricius, Moldenhawer, and others, in 58; Van Til and Dr. Doddridge, in 53; Hottinger, in 54; Lord Barrington,

* Justin, Hist. lib. xxiv. c. 4. xxv. c. 2. xxvii. 3. xxviii. 3. Livy, lib. xxxviii. cc. 12. 40. Strabo, lib. xiv. Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. v. c. 32.

† Compare Gal. i. 8. ii. iii. 1, *et seq.*

Drs. Benson and Lardner, in 53; Beausobre, Rosenmüller, and Dr. A. Clarke, in 52 or 53; Bishop Tomline, in 52. Theodoret, who is followed by Dr. Lightfoot and some others, imagined that it was one of those Epistles which Saint Paul wrote from Rome during his first confinement; but this opinion is contradicted by the apostle's silence concerning his bonds, which he has often mentioned in the letters that are known to have been written at that time.

It is evident that the Epistle to the Galatians was written *early*, because he complains in it of their speedy apostasy from his doctrine (Gal. i. 6), and warns them in the strongest and most forcible terms against the judaizing teachers, who disturbed the peace of the churches in Syria and Asia Minor (i. 7—9. iii. 1). The warmth of the apostle's expressions led Tertullian to conclude that Saint Paul was himself a *neophyte* or novice in the Christian faith at the time of writing this Epistle *. And as no intimation is given through the whole of it that he had been with them more than once, we are authorized to conclude that he wrote this letter from Corinth about the end of 52, or early in the year 53. The subscription indeed states it to have been written from Rome; but this is evidently spurious, for Saint Paul's first journey to Rome did not take place until at least ten years after the conversion of the Galatians.

III. The genuineness of this Epistle was never doubted. It is cited by the apostolic fathers, Clement of Rome †, Hermas ‡, Ignatius §, and Polycarp ||; and is declared to be authentic by Irenæus **, Clement of Alexandria ††, Tertullian ‡‡, Caius §§, Origen |||, and by all subsequent writers. It is worthy of remark, that this Epistle was acknowledged to be genuine by the heretic Marcion, who reckoned it the earliest written of all Saint Paul's Letters, and accordingly placed it first in his Apostolicon, or Collection of Apostolical Writings ***.

IV. The churches in Galatia, as in most other countries, were composed partly of converted Jews, and partly of Gentile

* Cont. Marcion, lib. i. c. 20.

† Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 37; 4to, vol. i. p. 298.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 57; 4to, vol. i. p. 309.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 76; 4to, vol. i. p. 319.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 95; 4to, vol. i. p. 330.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 163, 164; 4to, vol. i. p. 368.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 223; 4to, vol. i. p. 401.

‡‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 264; 4to, vol. i. p. 423.

§§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 374; 4to, vol. i. p. 482.

||| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 471; 4to, vol. i. p. 535.

††† Epiphanius, Hæres, 42.

converts, but the latter appear to have been most numerous. It appears from the contents of this Epistle, that, not long after the Galatians had embraced Christianity, a certain judaizing teacher or false apostle had either crept in or risen up among them, who, to advance his own doctrine, questioned Saint Paul's apostolical authority, insinuating that Peter and the apostles of the circumcision were superior to him, and consequently much more to be regarded. It was further insinuated that they never preached against the circumcision of Gentile converts; but that it was a doctrine peculiar to Paul, who was only an apostle of men, and had not such extraordinary powers and illumination as had been conferred on the other apostles. The false teacher seems even to have intimated, that Saint Paul did himself, secretly, and at some times, preach the necessity of circumcision to the Gentile converts; though generally, and at other times, he insisted on the contrary. In short, the false apostle was desirous that all the Gentile Christians should submit themselves to circumcision, and consequently oblige themselves to observe the whole law of Moses, as if the Gospel of Jesus Christ alone were insufficient to justify and save them. And so successful was this teacher in propagating this error, that some of the Galatians actually submitted to be circumcised (Gal. v. 2—12). From the expression of Saint Paul in Gal. v. 9—10, it is probable that this disturbance in the Galatian churches was made by one judaizing teacher only, and not by several zealots, as some commentators have supposed; and, from what is said in vi. 12, 13, it seems that he was a man of immoral character, who acted not from any religious views or motives, but from vain-glory and fear; that he might conciliate the favour of the Jews by increasing the number of proselytes, and so escape the persecutions raised by the unbelieving Jews against Saint Paul, and those who adhered to his doctrines.

IV. Such were the circumstances that occasioned Saint Paul to write this Epistle with his own hand (Gal. vi. 11), contrary to his usual practice of dictating his letters. Accordingly, its scope is, to assert his apostolical character and authority, and the doctrine which he taught, and to confirm the Galatian churches in the faith of Christ, especially with respect to the important point of justification by faith alone; to expose the errors which had been disseminated among them, by demonstrating to them the true nature and use of the moral and ceremonial law; and to revive those principles of Christianity which he had taught when he first preached the Gospel to them.

V. The Epistle to the Galatians, therefore, consists of three parts, viz.

PART 1. The introduction (i. 1—5).

PART 2. The treatise or discussion of the subjects which had occasioned this Epistle; in which

SECTION 1. is a vindication of Saint Paul's apostolical doctrine and authority, and shows that he was neither a missionary from the church at Jerusalem, nor a disciple of the apostles, but an immediate apostle of Christ himself, by divine revelation; consequently that he was in no respect inferior to Saint Peter himself (i. 6—24. ii).

SECTION 2. The apostle disputes against the advocates for circumcision and the observance of the law of Moses, and shows,

i. That justification is by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Mosaic law (iii. 1—18).

ii. That the design of God in giving the law was, not to justify but to convince of sin, as well as to restrain from the commission of it; and that being intended only for a temporary institution, instead of vacating the promise, it was designed to be subservient to it, by showing the necessity of a better righteousness than that of the law, and so to lead convinced souls to Christ; that, being justified by faith in him, they might obtain the benefit of the promise (iii. 19—24). Such being the end and design of the law, the apostle infers from it, that now, under the Gospel, we are freed from the law (25—29); and illustrates his inference by God's treatment of the Jewish church, which he put under the law, as a father puts a minor under a guardian (iv. 1—7).

SECTION 3. shows the great weakness and folly of the Galatians in going about to subject themselves to the law, and that by submitting to circumcision they became subject to the whole law, and would forfeit the benefits of the covenant of grace (iv. 8—31. v. 1—9).

SECTION 4. contains various instructions and exhortations for Christian behaviour, and particularly concerning a right use of their Christian freedom (v. 10—26. vi. 1—10).

PART 3. The conclusion, which is a summary of the topics discussed in this Epistle, terminates with an apostolical benediction (vi. 11—18).

VI. Although the subject discussed in the Epistle to the Galatians is the same that is treated in the Epistle to the Romans, viz. the doctrine of *justification by faith alone*, yet the two Epistles differ materially in this respect. The

Epistle to the Galatians (which was first written) was designed to prove against the Jews, that men are justified by faith *without the works of the law of Moses* *, which required perfect obedience to all its precepts, moral and ceremonial, under the penalty of the curse, from which the atonements and purifications prescribed by Moses had no power to deliver the sinner. On the contrary, in his Epistle to the Romans, Saint Paul treats of justification on a more enlarged plan; his design being to prove against both Jews and Gentiles, that neither the one nor the other can be justified meritoriously by performing *works of law*—that is, the works enjoined by the law of God, which is written on men's hearts; but that all must be justified gratuitously by faith through the obedience of Christ. The two Epistles, therefore, taken together, form a complete proof, that justification is not to be obtained meritoriously, either by works of morality, or by rites and ceremonies, though of divine appointment: but that it is a *free* gift, proceeding entirely from the mercy of God, to those who are qualified by faith to receive it †.

This Epistle is written with great energy and force of language, and at the same time affords a fine instance of Saint Paul's skill in managing an argument. The chief objection, which the advocate or advocates for the Mosaic law had urged against him, was, that he preached circumcision. In the beginning of the Epistle he overturns this slander by a statement of facts, without taking any express notice of it; but at the end he fully refutes it, that he might leave a strong and lasting impression upon their minds.

Though the erroneous doctrines of the judaizing teacher and his followers, as well as the calumnies which they spread for the purpose of discrediting him as an apostle, doubtless occasioned great uneasiness of mind to him and to the faithful in that age, and did considerable injury among the Galatians, at least for some time; yet, ultimately, these evils have proved of no small service to the church in general. For, by obliging the apostle to produce the evidences of his apostleship, and to relate the history of his life, especially after his conversion, we have obtained the fullest assurance that he really was an apostle, called to be an apostle by Jesus Christ himself, and acknowledged to be such by those who were apostles before him: consequently, we are assured, that our faith in the doctrines of the Gospel as taught by him (and it is he who has taught the

* Compare, among other passages, Gal. iii. 2, 3. 5. iv. 21. v. 1—4.

† Dr. Macknight's Preface to the Epistle to the Galatians, sect. 3.

peculiar doctrines of the Gospel most fully) is not built on the credit of men, but on the authority of the Spirit of God, by whom Saint Paul was inspired in the whole of the doctrine which he has delivered to the world.

As this letter was directed to the *churches* of Galatia, Dr. Macknight is of opinion that it was to be read publicly in them all. He thinks, that it was in the first instance sent by Titus to the brethren in Ancyra, the chief city of Galatia, with an order to them to communicate it to the other churches, in the same manner as the first Epistle to the Thessalonians was appointed to be read to all the brethren in that city, and in the province of Macedonia *.

* Dr. Macknight's Preface to the Epistle to the Galatians, sect. 3.

SECTION VII.

ON THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

I. *Account of the church at Ephesus*;—II. *Genuineness and authenticity of this Epistle, which was addressed to the Ephesians, and not to the church at Laodicea*;—III. *Date*;—IV. *Occasion and Scope*;—V. *Synopsis of its contents*;—VI. *Observations on its style*.

I. **EPHESUS** was the metropolis of Proconsular Asia. It was situated at the mouth of the river Cayster, on the shore of the Ægean sea, in that part antiently called Ionia (but now Natolia), and was particularly celebrated for the temple of Diana, a most magnificent and stately edifice, which had been erected at the common expense of the inhabitants of Asia Proper, and was reputed one of the seven wonders of the world. In the time of Saint Paul, this city abounded with orators and philosophers; and its inhabitants, in their Gentile state, were celebrated for their idolatry and skill in magic, as well as for their luxury and lasciviousness. Ephesus is now under the dominion of the Turks, and is in a state of almost total ruin, being reduced to fifteen poor cottages (erected not exactly on its original site), and its once-flourishing church diminished to *three* illiterate Greeks *.

* See the Rev. H. Lindsay's Visit to the Seven Apocalyptic Churches, in the Christian Observer for the year 1816, vol. xv. p. 190. Mr. Lindsay's account is confirmed by Mr. Hobhouse, who has given a very interesting account of the ruins of antient Ephesus which yet remain. See his Journey through Albania, &c. pp. 653—666, 4to, Lond. 1813.

Christianity was first planted in this city by Saint Paul, about A. D. 54, when he reasoned with the Jews in their synagogues for the space of three months; he did not however continue long there at that time, but hastened to keep the feast at Jerusalem, promising to return again to his hearers (Acts xviii. 19—21). Accordingly he came to Ephesus early the following year (Acts xix. 1, *et seq.*), and preached the word with such success, and performed such extraordinary miracles among them, that a numerous church was formed there, chiefly composed of Gentile converts; whose piety and zeal were so remarkable, that many of them, in abhorrence of the *curious arts* which they had used, burnt their magical books, to a great value (xix. 19). And such was the apostle's concern for their spiritual welfare, that he did not leave them until A. D. 56, when he had been about three years among them (xx. 31). After this he spent some time in Macedonia and Achaia; and on his return to Jerusalem (A. D. 57) he sent for the elders of the Ephesian church to meet him at Miletus. There he took an affectionate leave of them, as one that should *see them no more*; appealing to them with what fidelity he had discharged his ministry among them, and exhorting them to "take heed unto themselves, and unto the flock" committed to their care, lest they should be corrupted by seducing teachers who would arise among them, and artfully endeavour to pervert them (xx. 17—38).

II. The apostle Paul is universally admitted to be the author of the Epistle to the Ephesians. It is expressly *cited as his production* by Ignatius*, who has not fewer than seven distinct allusions to it†; and as he was contemporary with Saint Paul, his testimony alone is sufficient to determine its genuineness. This Epistle is likewise alluded to by Polycarp‡, and is cited by *name* by Irenæus§, Clement of Alexandria||, Tertullian**, Origen††, and by all subsequent writers without exception. Most of the antient manuscripts, and *all* the antient versions, have the words *ΕΝ ΕΦΕΣΩ*, "at Ephesus," in the first verse of this Epistle, which is an evident proof that the Epistle was written to the Ephesians. But Grotius, Mill, Wetstein, Vitringa, Venema, Benson, Paley,

* Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 70; 4to, vol. i. p. 316.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 78; 4to, vol. i. p. 320.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 95; 4to, vol. i. p. 330.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 163; 4to, vol. i. p. 368.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 223; 4to, vol. i. p. 401.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 263, 264; 4to, vol. i. p. 423.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 472; 4to, vol. i. p. 535.

and other learned men, have doubted or denied that this Epistle was written to the Ephesians, and have argued that it must have been written to the Laodiceans. They rest this opinion, first, on the assertion of Marcion, a heretic of the second century, who affirmed the same thing, but his testimony is of no weight: for Marcion altered and interpolated the writings of the New Testament, to make them favourable to *his* sentiments, and upon this very account he is censured by Tertullian (A. D. 200), as setting up an interpolation of his own with regard to the Epistle in question, in opposition to the *true testimony* of the church *. They further appeal to a passage in Basil's second book against Eunomius, in which he thus cites Eph. i. 1. "And writing to the Ephesians, as truly united to him "who is," through knowledge, he called them in a peculiar sense "such who are," saying; "to the saints who are" (or even) "to the faithful in Christ Jesus. For so those before us have transmitted it, and we have found it in antient copies †." From the concluding sentence of this quotation, it is inferred that certain manuscripts, which Basil had seen omitted the words *ἐν Ἐφεσῶν*, "at Ephesus." Michaelis, however, has shown at considerable length, that the omission of the word *οἱ*, "who are," was the subject of Basil's implied censure, as being hostile to the inference he wished to deduce, and not the omission of the words *ἐν Ἐφεσῶν*. And as this father, in another passage of his writings, *expressly cites* the Epistle to the Ephesians ‡ without any hesitation, it is evident that in his time (the latter part of the fourth century) this epistle was not considered as being addressed to the Laodiceans.

Thirdly, it is contended that there are no allusions in this Epistle to Saint Paul's having resided among the persons to whom it is addressed; and that the expressions in Eph. i. 15. iii. 2. and iv. 21. appear to be more suitable to persons whom he had never seen (which was the case of the Christians at Laodicea), than to the Ephesians, among whom he had resided about three years (Acts xx. 31). But these passages admit of easy and satisfactory interpretations, which directly refute this hypothesis. It will be recollected that four or five years had elapsed since Saint Paul had quitted Ephesus; he might therefore with great propriety express (in i. 15.) his complacency on *hearing* that they continued steadfast in the faith, notwithstand-

* Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 263, 264; 4to, vol. i. p. 423.

† See the original passage, *ibid.* 8vo, vol. iv. p. 401; 4to, vol. ii. p. 466; or in Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 142—146.

‡ *Ibid.* 8vo, vol. iv. p. 404; 4to, vol. ii. p. 467.

ing the various temptations to which they were exposed. Again, the expression in iii. 2 (εἰγε ἠκούσατε τὴν οἰκονομίαν) which many translate and understand to mean, *if ye have heard of the dispensation*,—more correctly means, *since ye have heard the dispensation* of the grace of God, which had been made known to them by Saint Paul himself. Consequently this verse affords no countenance to the hypothesis above mentioned. The same remark applies to iv. 21, where a similar construction occurs, which ought in like manner to be rendered, *since indeed ye have heard him*, &c. But most stress has been laid upon the direction given by Saint Paul in Col. iv. 16,—that the Colossians should “cause the Epistle which he wrote to them to be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that they should likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea;”—which (it is contended) affords a plain proof that the Epistle, in our copies inscribed to the Ephesians, must be that which is intended in Col. iv. 16, and consequently was originally written to the Laodiceans. But this conclusion does not necessarily follow: for it is highly probable (as Rosenmüller has remarked) that by “*the Epistle from Laodicea*” Saint Paul meant a letter addressed to him by the church of Laodicea, in answer to which he wrote the letter addressed to the Colossians (as being the larger church), desiring that they would send it to the Laodiceans, and get a copy of the Epistle which the latter had sent to Saint Paul, in order that the Colossians might better understand his reply*.

Michaelis and Haenlein, after Archbishop Usher and Bengel, get rid of all the difficulties attending this question, by supposing the Epistle to have been *encyclical* or circular, being addressed to the Ephesians, Laodiceans, and some other churches in Asia Minor. But it could hardly be circular in the sense in which Michaelis understands that term: for he supposes that the different copies transmitted by Saint Paul had *ἐν Ἐφεσῷ*, at *Ephesus*, *ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ*, at *Laodicea*, &c. as occasion required, and that the reason why all our manuscripts read *ἐν Ἐφεσῷ* is, that when the books of the New Testament were first collected, the copy used was obtained from Ephesus: but this, Bishop Middleton observes, seems to imply—what cannot be proved—that the canon was established by authority, and that all copies of this Epistle, not agreeing with the approved edition, were suppressed.

* Rosenmüller and Koppe, in their respective Prolegomena to the Epistle to the Ephesians.

Dr. Macknight is of opinion, that Saint Paul sent the Ephesians word by Tychicus, who carried their letter, to send a copy of it to the Laodiceans, with an order to them to communicate it to the Colossians. This hypothesis will account, as well as that of Michaelis, for the want of those marks of personal acquaintance which the apostle's former residence might lead us to expect, and on which so much stress has been laid: for every thing local would be purposely omitted in an Epistle which had a further destination.

The reader will adopt which of these hypotheses he may deem the best supported: we think the solution of Rosenmüller, above stated, the most natural and probable; and that, when the united testimonies of manuscripts, and all the fathers, with the exception of Basil, are taken into consideration, we are fully justified in regarding this Epistle as written to the Ephesians*.

III. The subscription to this Epistle states, that it was written from Rome, and sent to the Ephesians by Tychicus, who was also the bearer of the Epistle to the Colossians, the similarity of which in style and subject shows that it was written at the same time. That this Epistle was written during Saint Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, is evident from its allusions to his confinement (iii. 1, iv. 1, vi. 20); and as he does not express in it any hope of a speedy release (which he does in his other Epistles sent from that city), we conclude with Dr. Lardner, Bishop Tomline, and others, that it was written during the early part of Saint Paul's imprisonment, and probably in the year 61, soon after he arrived at Rome.

IV. As Saint Paul was, in a peculiar manner, the apostle of the Gentiles, and was now a prisoner at Rome in consequence of his having provoked the Jews by asserting that the observance of the Mosaic law was not necessary to obtain the favour of God, he was apprehensive lest advantage should be taken of his confinement to unsettle the minds of his Ephesian converts, who were almost wholly Gentiles. Hearing, however, that they stood firm in the faith of Christ, he wrote this Epistle in order to establish them in that faith, and to give them more exalted views of the love of God, and of the excellency and dignity of

* Stosch, de Epistolis Apostolorum non deperditis, pp. 101, *et seq.* Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 128—146. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 416—456; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 342—362. Macknight on Col. iv. 16. Bishop Middleton on the Greek Article, pp. 508—518, who observes, that if ever there were an epistle from Saint Paul to the Laodiceans, it is lost: for that, which is extant in Fabricius and Jones's work on the canon, (to which we may add Pritius) is universally admitted to be a forgery; yet the loss of a canonical writing is of all suppositions the most improbable.

Christ; and at the same time to fortify their minds against the scandal of the cross. With this view, he shows them that they were saved by grace; and that, however wretched they once were, now they had equal privileges with the Jews. He then proceeds to encourage them to persevere in their Christian calling, by declaring with what steadfastness he suffered for the truth, and with what earnestness he prayed for their establishment and continuance in it; and urges them to walk in a manner becoming their profession, in the faithful discharge both of the general and common duties of religion, and of the special duties of particular relations.

V. In this Epistle we may observe the following particulars, viz.

1. The inscription (i. 1, 2).

2. The doctrine pathetically explained, which contains,

i. Praise to God for the whole Gospel blessing (i. 3—14), with thanksgiving and prayer for the saints (i. 15—23.

ii. 1—10).

ii. A more particular admonition concerning their once wretched but now happy condition (ii. 11—22).

iii. A prayer for their establishment (iii).

3. The exhortation.

i. *General*, to walk worthy of their calling, agreeably to,

(1). The unity of the Spirit, and the diversity of his gifts (iv. 1—16).

(2). The difference between their former and present state (iv. 17—24).

ii. *Particular*.

(1). To avoid lying, anger, theft, and other sins (iv. 25—31. v. 1—21), with a commendation of the opposite virtues.

(2). To a faithful discharge of the relative duties of wives and husbands (v. 22—33), of children and parents (vi. 1—4), and of masters and servants (5—9).

iii. *Final*.—To war the spiritual warfare (vi. 10—20).

4. The conclusion (vi. 21—24).

VI. The style of this Epistle is exceedingly animated, and corresponds with the state of the apostle's mind at the time of writing. Overjoyed with the account which their messenger had brought him of their faith and holiness (i. 15), and transported with the consideration of the unsearchable wisdom of God, displayed in the work of man's redemption, and of his astonishing love towards the Gentiles in making them partakers, through faith, of all the benefits of Christ's death, he

soars high in his sentiments on these grand subjects, and gives his thoughts utterance in sublime and copious expressions. Many of them contain happy allusions to the temple and statue of Diana at Ephesus. “No *real* Christian,” says Dr. Macknight, “can read the doctrinal part of the Epistle to the Ephesians, without being impressed and roused by it, as by the sound of a trumpet*.”

* Preface to Ephesians, sect. 6.

SECTION VIII.

ON THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

I. *Account of the church at Philippi*;—II. *Date*;—III. *Occasion*;—
IV. *Scope, and synopsis of its contents*.

I. PHILIPPI was a city of Macedonia, of moderate extent, situated on the confines of Thrace. It was formerly called Crenides from its numerous springs, and afterwards Datus from the gold mines in its vicinity. The name of Philippi it received from Philip the father of Alexander, who fortified it, and made it a frontier town against the Thracians. Julius Cæsar planted a colony here, which was afterwards enlarged by Augustus, and hence its inhabitants were considered as free-men of Rome. Saint Paul planted a church here, A. D. 50, the particulars of which are related in Acts xvi. 9—40; and it appears from Acts xx. 6, that he visited them again A. D. 57, though no particulars are recorded concerning that visit. Of all the churches planted by Saint Paul, that at Philippi seems to have cherished the most tender concern for him: and though it appears to have been but a small community, yet its members were peculiarly generous towards him. For when Christianity was first planted in Macedonia, no other church contributed any thing to his support, except the Philippians; who, while he was preaching at Thessalonica, the metropolis of that country, sent him money twice, that the success of the Gospel might not be hindered by its preachers becoming burthensome to the Thessalonians (Phil. iv. 15, 16). The same attention they showed to the apostle, and for the same reason, while he preached the Gospel at Corinth (2 Cor. xi. 9). And when they heard that Saint Paul was under confinement at Rome, they manifested a similar affectionate concern for him;

and sent Epaphroditus to him with a present, lest he should want necessities during his imprisonment (ii. 25. iv. 10, 14—18).

II. It appears from Saint Paul's own words, that this Epistle was written while he was a prisoner at Rome (i. 7. 13, iv. 22); and from the expectation which he discovers, of being soon released and restored to them *, as well as from the intimations contained in this letter (i. 12, ii. 26), that he had then been a considerable time at Rome, it is probable that he wrote the Epistle to the Philippians towards the close of his first imprisonment, at the end of A. D. 62, or perhaps at the commencement of 63. The genuineness of this letter was never questioned.

III. The more immediate occasion of the Epistle to the Philippians was the return of Epaphroditus, one of their pastors, by whom Saint Paul sent it, as a grateful acknowledgment of their kindness in sending him supplies of money. From the manner in which Saint Paul expressed himself on this occasion, it appears that he was in great want of necessities before their contributions arrived; for, as he had not converted the Romans, he did not consider himself as entitled to receive supplies from them. Being a prisoner, he could not work as formerly: and it was his rule never to receive any thing from the churches where factions had been raised against him. It also appears that the Philippians were the only church from whom he received any assistance, and that he conferred this honour upon them, because they loved him exceedingly, had preserved his doctrine in purity, and had always conducted themselves as sincere Christians.

IV. The scope of this Epistle therefore is to confirm the Philippians in the faith, to encourage them to walk in a manner becoming the Gospel of Christ, to caution them against the intrusion of judaizing teachers, and to testify his gratitude for their Christian bounty.

Accordingly, after a short introduction (i. 1, 2), he proceeds,

1. To express his gratitude to God for their continuing steadfast in the faith, and prays that it may last (i. 3—11); and, lest

* M. Oeder, in a programma published in 1731, contended that this Epistle was written at a much earlier period at Corinth, and shortly after the planting of the church at Philippi: this hypothesis was examined and refuted by Wolfius in his *Curæ Philologicae*, vol. iii. pp. 168, *et seq.* and 271, *et seq.* In 1799 the celebrated Professor Paulus published a programma, *de Tempore Scriptæ prioris ad Timotheum atque ad Philippenses Epistolæ Paulinæ*; in which he endeavours to show that it was written at Cæsarea; but his hypothesis was refuted by Heinrichs in his notes on this Epistle.

they should be discouraged by the tidings of his imprisonment, he informs them that his sufferings and confinement, so far from impeding the progress of the Gospel, had “rather fallen out to its furtherance;” and assures them of his readiness to live or die, as should be most for their welfare and the glory of God (12—26) *.

2. He then exhorts them, in a strain of the most sublime and pathetic eloquence, to maintain a conduct worthy of the Gospel, and to the practice of mutual love and candour, enforced by the highest of all examples—that of Jesus Christ; and to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, that he may rejoice in the day of Christ on their account (i. 21—30, ii. 1—17); and promises to send Timothy and Epaphroditus, of whom he makes a very affectionate mention (19—30).

3. He solemnly cautions them against judaizing teachers, “who preached Christ through envy and strife” (iii. iv. 1).

4. After some admonitions to particular persons (iv. 2, 3), and some general exhortations to Christian cheerfulness, moderation, and prayer (4—7), he proceeds to recommend virtue in the most extensive sense, mentioning all the different bases on which it had been placed by the Grecian philosophers (8, 9). Towards the close of his Epistle, he makes his acknowledgments to the Philippians for their seasonable and liberal supply, as it was a convincing proof of their affection for him, and of their concern for the support of the Gospel, which he preferred far before any secular interest of his own; expressly disclaiming all selfish mercenary views, and assuring them, with a noble simplicity, that he was able upon all occasions to accommodate his temper to his circumstances; and had learned, under the teachings of divine grace, in whatever station Providence might see fit to place him, therewith to be content (10—18). After which the apostle, having encouraged them to expect a rich supply of all their wants from their God and Father, to whom he devoutly ascribes the honour of all (19), concludes with salutations from himself and his friends at Rome to the whole church, and a solemn benediction (21—23).

It is remarkable that the Epistle to the church at Philippi is the only one, of all Saint Paul’s letters to the churches, in

* Verses 15—18 are a parenthesis, though not so marked in any editions or translations which we have seen.

which not one censure is expressed or implied against any of its members; but, on the contrary, sentiments of unqualified commendation and confidence pervade every part of this Epistle. Its style is singularly animated, affectionate, and pleasing.

SECTION IX.

ON THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

I. *Account of the city and church at Colossæ; — II. Date; — III. Occasion of this Epistle; — IV. Scope and analysis.*

I. COLOSSÆ (or Colassæ*) was a city of Phrygia Pacatiana in Asia Minor, situated near the conflux of the Lycus and the Meander. It was formerly a large and populous place, but in the time of Saint Paul had lost much of its antient greatness, and stood nearly equidistant from Laodicea and Hierapolis. According to Eusebius†, all these cities were destroyed by an earthquake in the tenth year of the emperor Nero, about a year after the writing of this Epistle.

By whom or at what time Christianity was planted at Colossæ, we have no certain information. Dr. Lardner, Bishop Tomline, and others, are of opinion that the church at Colossæ was founded by Saint Paul; and they ground this opinion principally on the following considerations; viz.

That Saint Paul was twice in Phrygia, in which country were the cities of Colossæ, Laodicea, and Hierapolis—that he does in effect say that he had dispensed the Gospel to the Colossians (i. 21—25)—and that it appears, from the terms of affection and authority discoverable in this Epistle, that he did not address them as strangers, but as acquaintances, friends, and converts. It is true that Saint Paul was twice in Phrygia, but he does not seem to have visited the three cities above mentioned: for his route lay considerably to the northward of them, from Cilicia and Derbe to Lystra, and thence through Phrygia and Galatia to Mysia and Troas (Acts xvi. 6). And in his second tour he also passed through Galatia and Phrygia to Ephesus and

* In Col. i. 2. instead of *ἐν Κολοσσαῖς*, at Colossæ, the Alexandrian, Vatican, Codex Ephrem, and several other antient manuscripts, read *ἐν Κολασσῶν*, at Colassæ, or among the Colassians. With them agree the Syriac, Coptic, and Slavonic versions, as well as Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and many other learned fathers.

† Euseb. Chron. ad Ann. Neronis 10.

Troas (Acts xviii. 23), and so through the upper parts, or northern districts, of Asia Minor (xix. 1). That Saint Paul did *not* plant the church at Colossæ, is evident from his own declaration in ii. 1. where he says, that neither the Colossians nor the Laodiceans had then “seen his face in the flesh.”

But though Saint Paul had never been at Colossæ when he wrote this Epistle, yet Christianity had evidently been taught, and a church planted there. Rosenmüller is of opinion, that the Gospel was introduced into that city by Epaphras. It is not improbable that Epaphras, who is mentioned in i. 7. iv. 12, 13, was one of the earliest teachers; but it does not necessarily follow that he was the person who first planted Christianity there. Indeed, it is not likely that the Colossians would send away the founder of their church while it was yet in an infant state. As it appears from Acts xix. 10. that, during Saint Paul’s residence at Ephesus, many persons, both Jews and Greeks, came from various parts of Asia to hear the Gospel, Michaelis supposes that several Colossians, particularly Philemon, were of this number. He also thinks that Timothy might have taught them the Christian faith; as he subjoins his name to his own (i. 1), and throughout the first chapter speaks in their joint names, except where the subject relates to his own imprisonment, and where Timothy of course could not be included.

II. But though it is impossible now to ascertain the founder of the church at Colossæ, the Epistle itself furnishes us with a clue to its date. In Col. iv. 3. the apostle alludes to his imprisonment, from which circumstance, as well as from its close affinity to the Epistle addressed to the Ephesians, it is evident that it was written nearly at the same time. Accordingly most commentators and critics refer it to the year 62. Its genuineness was never disputed.

III. At the time of writing this Epistle, Saint Paul was “an ambassador in bonds,” for maintaining the freedom of the Gentile converts from all subjection to the law of Moses.

Its immediate occasion was, some difficulties that had arisen among them; in consequence of which they sent Epaphras to Rome, to acquaint the apostle with the state of their affairs; to which we may add the letter (Col. iv. 16.) sent to him by the Laodiceans, who seem to have written to him concerning the errors of the false teachers, and to have asked his advice. Saint Paul therefore replies in the present Epistle, which he sent to the Colossians as being the larger church, and also because the false teachers had probably caused greater disturbances among the Colossians; but desired that they would send

the same Epistle to the Laodiceans, and ask them for a copy of their letter to Saint Paul, in order that they might the better understand his answer.

Who the false teachers were, is a point not satisfactorily determined. Michaelis is of opinion that this Epistle was directed against the tenets and practices of the Essenes, of which sect an account has been already given *. But it is more probable that they were partly superstitious judaizing teachers, who diligently inculcated not only the Mosaic law, but also the absurd notions of the rabbins, and partly converts from Gentilism, who blended Platonic notions with the doctrines of the Gospel. It is well known that the Platonists entertained singular ideas concerning demons, whom they represented as carrying men's prayers to God, from whom they brought back the blessings supplicated; and the doctrines of the Jews concerning angels was nearly the same as that of the Platonics concerning demons. It appears from Col. ii. 16—23, that the false teachers inculcated the worship of angels, abstinence from animal food, the observance of the Jewish festivals, new moons and sabbaths, the mortification of the body by long-continued fastings, and, in short, the observance of the Mosaic ritual law, as absolutely necessary to salvation.

IV. The scope of the Epistle to the Colossians is to show that all hope of man's redemption is founded on Christ our Redeemer, in whom alone all complete fulness, perfections, and sufficiency, are centered; to caution the Colossians against the insinuations of judaizing teachers, and also against philosophical speculations and deceits, and human traditions, as inconsistent with Christ and his fulness for our salvation; and to excite the Colossians, by the most persuasive arguments, to a temper and conduct worthy of their sacred character. The Epistle therefore consists of two principal parts besides the introduction and conclusion.

1. After a short inscription or introduction (i. 1, 2), Saint Paul begins with expressing great joy for the favourable character which he had heard of them, and assures them that he daily prayed for their further improvement (3—14). He then makes a short digression, in order to describe the dignity of Jesus Christ, who, he declares, created all things, whether thrones or dominions, principalities or powers—that he alone was the head of the church, and had reconciled men to the Father (15—20). The inference from this description is evi-

* See Vol. I. pp. 171, 172.

dent, that Jesus was superior to angels; that they were created beings, and ought not to be worshipped. In verse 21, Saint Paul returns from this digression to the sentiments with which he had introduced it in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses; and again expresses his joy, that the Colossians remained faithful to the Gospel, which was to be preached to the Gentiles, without the restraints of the ceremonial law. From this view of the excellency of Christ's person, and the riches of his grace, the apostle takes occasion to express the cheerfulness with which he suffered in the cause of the Gospel, and his earnest solicitude to fulfil his ministry among them in the most successful manner; assuring them of his concern for them and for the other Christians in the neighbourhood, that they might be established in their adherence to the Christian faith (i. 21—29. ii. 1—7).

2. Having given these general exhortations, he proceeds directly to caution them against the vain and deceitful philosophy of the new teachers, and their superstitious adherence to the law; shows the superiority of Christ to angels, and warns Christians against worshipping them. He censures the observation of Jewish sabbaths and festivals, and cautions the Colossians against those corrupt additions which some were attempting to introduce, especially by rigours and superstitions of their own devising (ii. 8—23).

3. To these doctrinal instructions succeed precepts concerning the practical duties of life, especially the relative duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, servants and masters (iii. iv. 1—6).

4. The epistle concludes with matters chiefly of a private nature, except the directions for reading it in the church of Laodicea, as well as in that of Colossæ (iv. 7—18).

Whoever, says Michaelis, would understand the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, must read them together. The one is in most places a commentary on the other; the meaning of single passages in one Epistle, which, if considered alone, might be variously interpreted, being determined by the parallel passages in the other Epistle. Yet, though there is a great similarity, the Epistle to the Colossians contains many things which are not to be found in that to the Ephesians, especially in regard to the worship of angels; and many single points, which appear to be Essene, and might prevail at Colossæ*.

* Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 121—124.

SECTION X.

ON THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

I. *Antient and modern state of Thessalonica*;—II. *Account of the Christian church there*;—III. *Genuineness of this Epistle*;—IV. *Its occasion and scope*;—V. *Synopsis of its contents*.

1. **THESSALONICA** was a large and populous city and seaport of Macedonia, the capital of one of the four districts into which the Romans divided that country after its conquest by Paulus Æmilius. It was situated on the Thermian Bay, and was antiently called *Thermæ*; but, being rebuilt by Philip the father of Alexander after his victory over the Thessalians, it then received the name of Thessalonica.

At the time of writing this Epistle, Thessalonica was the residence of the proconsul who governed the province of Macedonia, and of the quæstor who had the charge of the imperial revenues. Besides being the seat of government, this port carried on an extensive commerce, which caused a great influx of strangers from all quarters; so that Thessalonica was remarkable for the number, wealth, and learning of its inhabitants. The Jews were extremely numerous here, and their place of worship was called, by way of eminence, "*the synagogue*" (Acts xvii. 1).*

II. Christianity was first planted here by Saint Paul, A. D. 50, who formed a church, composed both of Jews and Gentiles, but the latter were most numerous (Acts xvii. 2—4). The unbelieving Jews, however, having stirred up a persecution against him and his company, they were forced to fly to Beræa, and thence to Athens (xvii. 5—15), from which city he proceeded to Corinth. Being thus prevented from visiting the Thessalonians again as he had intended. (1 Thess. ii. 17, 18), he sent Silas and Timothy to visit them in his stead (iii. 6); and, on their return to him at Corinth (Acts xvii. 14, 15. xviii. 5), he wrote

* The modern name of this place is Salonika: it is the chief port of modern Greece, and has a population of sixty thousand persons, twelve thousand of whom are Jews. "In some respects," says a learned traveller, "Thessalonica is the same now it was then; a set of turbulent Jews constituted a very principal part of its population; and, when Saint Paul came hither from Philippi, where the Gospel was first preached, to communicate the "glad tidings" to the Thessalonians, the Jews were sufficient in number to "set all the city in an uproar." Dr. D. E. Clarke's Travels, part ii. sect. iii. p. 369. In pp. 346—374, he has given a very interesting account of the antiquities, present state, and commerce of Thessalonica.

the first Epistle to the Thessalonians early in A. D. 52 from Corinth, and not from Athens, as the spurious subscription to this Epistle imports *.

III. The first Epistle to the Thessalonians is universally admitted to have been the earliest written of all Saint Paul's letters, and we find that he was anxious that it should be read to all the Christian churches in Macedonia. In chap. v. 7, he gives the following command: "I adjure you by the Lord that this Epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." This direction is very properly inserted in his first Epistle. Its genuineness has never been disputed. Polycarp † has probably referred to it, and it is certainly quoted and recognized as Saint Paul's production (together with the second Epistle) by Irenæus ‡, Clement of Alexandria §, Tertullian ||, Caius **, Origen ††, and all subsequent ecclesiastical writers.

IV. The immediate occasion of Saint Paul's writing this Epistle was, the favourable report which Timothy had brought him of the steadfastness of the Thessalonians in the faith of the Gospel. He therefore wrote to convince them of its truth, and to confirm them in that faith, lest they should be turned aside from it by the persecutions of the unbelieving Jews, and also to excite them to a holy conversation, becoming the dignity of their high and holy calling. With this view, after a short introduction (i. 1), in which he unites the names of Timothy and Silvanus, his two assistants in planting and watering the church at Thessalonica, with his own name, Saint Paul expresses his thanks to God for their faith, love, and patient expectation of Christ's coming (2—4); and then proceeds to show the divine origin of the Christian revelation by the four following arguments.

1. That many and great miracles were performed by the preachers of the Gospel, professedly for the purpose of demonstrating that they were commissioned by God to preach it to the world (i. 5—10). In this part of his discussion Saint Paul highly commends their faith and constancy.

2. That the character, behaviour, and views of the first preachers of the Gospel are an evidence of its truth. The

* Grotius has contended that the *first* Epistle to the Thessalonians is in reality the second, but he has not supported that conjecture by any historical evidence.

† Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 96; 4to, vol. i. p. 330.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 164; 4to, vol. i. p. 368.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 223; 4to, vol. i. p. 401.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 264; 4to, vol. i. p. 423.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 374; 4to, vol. i. p. 482.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 528. 530; 4to, vol. i. pp. 566, 567.

apostles and their assistants, by preaching the Gospel, every where brought upon themselves all manner of present evils, without obtaining the least temporal advantage, in possession or in prospect; that, in preaching this new doctrine, they did not in any respect accommodate it to the prevailing inclinations of their hearers, nor encourage them in their vicious practices: That they used none of the base arts peculiar to impostors, in order to obtain belief; but that their manner of preaching was in all respects suitable to the character of missionaries from God; so that, on account of their personal character, they were entitled to the highest credit as divine teachers (ii. iii).

3. That the first preachers of the Gospel delivered to their disciples, from the very beginning, precepts of the greatest strictness and holiness; so that, by the sanctity of its precepts, the Gospel is shown to be a scheme of religion, every way worthy of the true God, and highly beneficial to mankind, (iv. 1—12). The practical directions introduced in this part of the Epistle were admirably suited to the state of the Thessalonian church. The first was, that they should live chastely, and carefully abstain from that impurity to which the Gentiles were much addicted; for Christianity requires the utmost purity of life. The Christians at Thessalonica loved each other and all the Christians in that place so affectionately, that the apostle recommended it to them, only to abound therein more and more; and, by their exemplary conduct, to live in peace and credit with all men.

The Heathens had such imperfect notions and wavering expectations of a future state, that they used to howl at their funerals, and excessively lament over their dead, as if they were utterly lost, and never to live in another state. Saint Paul therefore advises the Christians not to sorrow, like those who had no hope of a resurrection to a happy immortality. Thence he takes occasion to prove,

4. That Jesus Christ, the author of our religion, was declared to be the Son of God and the judge of the world by his resurrection from the dead; and that, by the same miracle, his own promise, and the predictions of his apostles concerning his return from Heaven to reward the righteous and punish the wicked—especially those who obey not the Gospel—are rendered absolutely certain (iv. 13—18. v. 1—11).

The Epistle concludes with various practical advices and instructions (v. 12—28).

The following tabular synopsis will perhaps show the bearings of the preceding arguments more clearly:

- I. The introduction (i. 1—4).
- II. The treatise or argumentative part of the Epistle (i. 5—10. ii—v. 1—11).
 1. The *first* argument in proof of the divine original of the Gospel, founded upon the miracles by which it was confirmed (i. 5—10).
 2. The *second* argument, taken from the character, behaviour, and views of its first preachers (ii. 1—13).
 - (1). Answer to the objection against the truth of the Christian miracles, taken from the unbelief of the Jews in Judea, and their persecuting Jesus and his disciples ii. 14—20).
 - (2). Answer to the objection urged against the preachers of the Gospel, for not delivering themselves from persecution by their miraculous powers (iii. 1—4).
 - (3). Answer to the objection against Saint Paul in particular, that his quitting Thessalonica was a proof that he did not love the Thessalonians (iii. 5—13).
 3. The *third* argument in proof of the divine original of the Gospel, taken from the holy nature of its precepts (iv. 1—12).
 4. The *fourth* argument, taken from the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the author of the Gospel, by which God declared him to be his Son, the governor and judge of the world (iv. 13—18. v. 1—11).
- III. The conclusion, containing various practical admonitions and instructions (v. 12—28).

In thus exhibiting the proofs of the divine original of the Gospel, Dr. Macknight remarks *, that Saint Paul with great propriety insisted on the character, behaviour, and views of the first Christian teachers; because an argument of that kind could not fail to have great weight with the Greeks, as it made them sensible that the ministers of the Gospel were the very reverse of their philosophers, the only teachers to whom that intelligent and inquisitive people had hitherto listened. At the same time, besides proving the divine original of the Gospel, the apostle, by wholesome reproofs, with great address and affection, corrected certain vices and irregularities which the Thessalonians had not yet amended.

* Pref. to 1 Thess. sect. 3. We have adopted this learned commentator's view of this Epistle, as presenting its scope to the best possible advantage.

SECTION XI.

ON THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

I. *Date, occasion, and scope of this Epistle*; — II. *Analysis of its contents*; — III. *Observations on this Epistle*.

I. THE second Epistle to the Thessalonians was evidently written soon after the first (A. D. 52), and from the same place: for Silvanus or Silas, and Timothy, are joined together with the apostle in the inscription of this Epistle as well as of the former. This Epistle was occasioned by the information communicated to Saint Paul by the person who had conveyed his first letter to the Thessalonians, respecting the state of their church. Among other things he was informed, from some expressions in it *, that many of them expected that the day of judgment would happen in that age; and that such of them, as thought the advent of Christ and the end of the world to be at hand, were neglecting their secular affairs, as being inconsistent with a due preparation for that important and awful event. As soon, therefore, as the state of the Thessalonians was made known to Saint Paul, he wrote this second Epistle, to correct their misapprehension, to rescue them from an error which (appearing to rest on apostolical authority) must ultimately be injurious to the spread of the Gospel, and to recommend several Christian duties.

II. After a short introduction, the apostle begins with commending the faith and charity of the Thessalonians, of which he had heard a favourable report. He expresses his joy on account of the patience with which they endured persecution; which, he observes, was a proof of a righteous judgment to come, where their persecutors would meet with their proper recompense, and the righteous be delivered out of all their afflictions. And all this (he assures them) will take place, when Jesus Christ returns with pomp and majesty as universal Judge. He further assures them of his constant prayers for their further improvement, in order that they may attain the felicity promised (ch. i).

He then proceeds to rectify the mistake of the Thessalonians, who, from misunderstanding a passage in his former letter, believed that the day of judgment was at hand. ‘The day of the Lord,’ he informs them, will not come until a great apostasy has overspread the Christian world, the nature of which he describes. Symptoms of this mystery of iniquity had then appeared; but the apostle expresses his thankfulness to God,

* See 1 Thess. iv. 15. 17. v. 4, 6.

that the Thessalonians had escaped this corruption: and he exhorts them to steadfastness, praying that God would comfort and strengthen them (ii).

He next requests their prayers for himself, and for Silvanus and Timothy, his two assistants; at the same time expressing his confidence that they would pay a due regard to the instructions he had given them. And he proceeds to correct some irregularities that had crept into their church. Many of the Thessalonians seem to have led an idle and disorderly life: these he severely reproves, and commands the faithful to shun their company, if they still remained incorrigible. Saint Paul concludes with his apostolical benediction; and informs them that his writing the salutation with his own hand was a token of the genuineness of all the Epistles which he wrote.

From the preceding view of this Epistle, it will be seen that it consists of five parts, viz.

1. The inscription (i. 1, 2).
2. Saint Paul's thanksgiving and prayer for them (i. 3—12).
3. The rectification of their mistake, and the doctrine concerning the man of sin (ii).
4. Various advices relative to Christian virtues, particularly,
 - i. To prayer, with a prayer for the Thessalonians (iv. 1—5).
 - ii. To correct the disorderly (iv. 6—16).
5. The conclusion (iv. 17, 18).

III. Although the second Epistle to the Thessalonians is the shortest of all Saint Paul's letters to the churches, it is not inferior to any of them in the sublimity of the sentiments, and in that excellent spirit by which all the writings of this apostle are so eminently distinguished. Besides those marks of genuineness and authority which it has in common with the rest of the apostolical Epistles, it has *one* peculiar to itself, in the exact representation it contains of the papal power, under the characters of the "Man of Sin," and the "Mystery of Iniquity." For, considering how directly opposite the principles here described were to the genius of Christianity, it must have appeared, at the time when this Epistle was written, highly improbable to all human apprehension that they should ever have prevailed in the Christian church; and consequently a prediction like this, which answers so exactly in every particular to the event, must be allowed to carry its own evidence along with it, and to prove that its author wrote under divine influence*.

* Dr. Doddridge's *Introd. to 2 Thess.* For a full illustration of the prophecy above mentioned, see Bishop Newton's *Dissertations*, vol. ii. diss. 22. Dr. Benson's *Dissertation on the Man of Sin*, (Paraphrase on 1 and 2 Thess. pp. 173—197. 2d edit.), or Drs. Macknight and A. Clarke on 2 Thess. ii.

SECTION XII.

ON THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

I. Account of Timothy;—II. Date of this Epistle;—III. Genuineness and authenticity of the Two Epistles to Timothy;—IV. Scope and synopsis of the First Epistle;—V. Observations on the use which the church is to make, in every age, of Saint Paul's Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

I. TIMOTHY, to whom this Epistle was addressed, was a native of Lystra, a city of Lycaonia, in Asia Minor. His father was a Greek, but his mother was a Jewess (Acts xvi. 1), and, as well as his grandmother Lois, a person of excellent character (2 Tim. i. 5). The pious care they took of his education soon appeared to have the desired success; for we are assured by Saint Paul, that, from his childhood, Timothy was well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim. iii. 15). It is generally supposed that he was converted to the Christian faith during the first visit made by Paul and Barnabas to Lystra (Acts xiv). From the time of his conversion, Timothy made such proficiency in the knowledge of the Gospel, and was so remarkable for the sanctity of his manners, as well as for his zeal in the cause of Christ, that he attracted the esteem of all the brethren in those parts. Accordingly, when the apostle came from Antioch in Syria to Lystra the second time, they commended Timothy so highly to him, that Saint Paul selected him to be the companion of his travels, having previously circumcised him (Acts xvi. 1—3), and ordained him in a solemn manner by imposition of hands (1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6), though at that time he probably was not more than twenty years of age (1 Tim. iv. 12). From this period, frequent mention is made of Timothy, as the attendant of Saint Paul in his various journeys, assisting him in preaching the Gospel, and in conveying his instructions to the churches. When the apostle was driven from Thessalonica and Beræa by persecution, he left Silas and Timothy there to strengthen the churches in the faith (Acts xvii. 13, 14). Thence they went to Saint Paul at Corinth (xviii. 5), from which city he again sent Timothy to Thessalonica (Acts xix. 22; 1 Thess. iii. 2, 3) to comfort the believers under their tribulations and persecutions. Timothy returning to the apostle at Corinth, next accompanied him into Asia (Acts xx. 4), and was left at Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 3, 4.) to instruct the church in that city, the care of which was con-

fided to Timothy. How long he governed the Ephesian church is not known; and we are equally uncertain as to the time of his death. An ecclesiastical tradition relates that he suffered martyrdom, being slain with stones and clubs, A. D. 97, while he was preaching against idolatry in the vicinity of the temple of Diana at Ephesus. His *supposed* relics were translated to Constantinople, with great pomp, A. D. 356, in the reign of Constantius.

II. The date of this Epistle has been much disputed. Dr. Lardner refers it to the year 56; Dr. Benson and Michaelis (after Cappel, Grotius, Lightfoot, and several other critics) date it in A. D. 58; Bishop Pearson, Le Clerc, Dr. Mill, and Rosenmüller, in A. D. 65; Drs. Whitby, Macknight, and Paley, and Bishop Tomline, in 64.

In favour of the early date it is argued, 1. That it appears from the third chapter of this Epistle, that no bishops had been then appointed at Ephesus. Saint Paul instructs Timothy in the choice, as of an appointment to a new office, and “hopes to return to him shortly.” And it is not probable the apostle would suffer a community to be long without governors. Now he departed from Ephesus when he travelled into Macedonia (Acts xx. 1), and we see from v. 17. 28. that on his return bishops had been appointed. Consequently this Epistle must have been written at the beginning of his journey; for Timothy soon left Ephesus, and was at Corinth with Paul (Acts xx. 4). He even joined him in Macedonia, for the second Epistle to the Corinthians, written in Macedonia, was in the joint names of Paul and Timothy. This Epistle therefore was written a short time before the second to the Corinthians.—2. It is further contended, that Timothy, at the time this Epistle was written, was in danger of being “despised for his youth” (1 Tim. iv. 12). As he became an associate of Paul at Lystra (Acts xvi. 1) so early as A. D. 50, he must then have been, as an assistant in the Gospel, at least twenty years of age. If this Epistle was written A. D. 65, he must have been of the age of thirty-five years, and could not have been less than fifteen years a preacher of the Gospel. He could not in that case have been despised for his youth; though he might, before he had reached his twenty-seventh year.

On the contrary, in behalf of the later date, which supposes this Epistle to have been written after Saint Paul’s first imprisonment at Rome, A. D. 64 or 65, it is insisted,

1. That it appears from Saint Paul’s Epistles to Philemon (22) and to the Philippians (ii. 24), that he evidently designed, when he had a prospect of being released, to go both to Colossæ and into Macedonia. Now it is admitted, that these two

Epistles were written towards the close of Saint Paul's first imprisonment at Rome; and, if he executed his intention of going to Colossæ immediately after his release, it is very probable that he would visit Ephesus, which was in the vicinity of Colossæ, and proceed thence to Philippi.

2. We further learn from the first Epistle to Timothy, that he was left at Ephesus to oppose the following errors: 1. Fables invented by the Jewish doctors to recommend the observance of the law of Moses as necessary to salvation;—2. Uncertain genealogies, by which individuals endeavoured to trace their descent from Abraham, in the persuasion that they would be saved, merely because they had Abraham to their father;—3. Intricate questions and strifes about some words in the law;—4. Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, who reckoned that which produced most gain to be the best kind of godliness: and oppositions of knowledge falsely so named. But these errors had not taken place in the Ephesian church before the apostle's departure; for, in his charge to the Ephesian elders at Miletus, he foretold that the false teachers were to enter among them after his departing, Acts xx. 29, *I know that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.* The same thing appears from the two Epistles which the apostle wrote to the Corinthians; the one from Ephesus before the riot of Demetrius, the other from Macedonia after that event; and from the Epistle which he wrote to the Ephesians themselves from Rome, during his confinement there. For in none of these letters is there any notice taken of the above-mentioned errors as subsisting among the Ephesians at the time they were written, which cannot be accounted for on the supposition that they were prevalent in Ephesus, when the apostle went into Macedonia after the riot. We conclude therefore with Dr. Macknight, that the first Epistle to Timothy, in which the apostle desired him to abide at Ephesus, for the purpose of opposing the judaizers and their errors, could not be written, either from Troas, or from Macedonia, after the riot, as those, who contend for the early date of that Epistle, suppose: but it must have been written some time after the apostle's release from his confinement in Rome, when, no doubt, he visited the church at Ephesus, and found the judaizing teachers there busily employed in spreading their pernicious errors.

4. In the first Epistle to Timothy, the same persons, doctrines, and practices, are reprobated, which are condemned in

the second. Compare 1 Tim. iv. 1—6. with 2 Tim. iii. 1—5, and 1 Tim. vi. 20. with 2 Tim. ii. 14, and 1 Tim. vi. 4. with 2 Tim. ii. 16. The same commands, instructions, and encouragements are given to Timothy in the first Epistle, as in the second. Compare 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14. with 2 Tim. iv. 1—5. The same remedies for the corruptions which had taken place among the Ephesians, are prescribed in the first Epistle, as in the second. Compare 1 Tim. iv. 14. with 2 Tim. i. 6, 7. And as in the second Epistle, so in the first, every thing is addressed to Timothy, as superintendent both of the teachers and of the laity in the church at Ephesus: all which, Dr. Mac-knight justly thinks, imply that the state of things among the Ephesians was the same when the two Epistles were written. Consequently, the first Epistle was written only a few months before the second, and not long before the apostle's death.

To the late date of this first Epistle, however, there are three plausible objections, which admit of easy solutions.

1. It is thought, that if the first Epistle to Timothy was written after the apostle's release, he could not, with any propriety, have said to Timothy, iv. 12. *Let no man despise thy youth.*—But it is replied, that Servius Tullius, in classing the Roman people, as Aulus Gellius relates *, divided their age into three periods. Childhood, he limited to the age of seventeen: Youth, from that to forty-six: and old age, from forty-six to the end of life. Now, supposing Timothy to have been eighteen years old, A. D. 50, when he became Paul's assistant, he would be no more than 32, A. D. 64, two years after the apostle's release, when it is supposed this Epistle was written. Since therefore Timothy was then in that period of life, which, by the Greeks as well as the Romans, was considered as youth, the apostle, with propriety, might say to him, *Let no man despise thy youth.*

2. When the apostle touched at Miletus, in his voyage to Jerusalem, with the collections, the church at Ephesus had a number of elders, that is, of bishops and deacons, who came to him at Miletus, Acts xx. 17. It is therefore asked, What occasion was there, in an Epistle written after the apostle's release, to give Timothy directions concerning the ordination of bishops and deacons, in a church where there were so many elders already? The answer is, the elders who came to the apostle at Miletus, in the year 58, might have been too few for the church at Ephesus, in her increased state, in the year 65.

* Noctes Atticæ, lib. x. c. 28.

Besides false teachers had then entered, to oppose whom, more bishops and deacons might be needed, than were necessary in the year 58. Not to mention, that some of the first elders having died, others were wanted to supply their places.

3. Because the apostle wrote to Timothy, that *he hoped to come to him soon*, 1 Tim. iii. 14, it is argued, that the letter, in which this is said, must have been written before the apostle said to the Ephesian elders, Acts xx. 25, *I know that all ye, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more*. But if, by this, the first Epistle to Timothy is proved to have been written before the apostle's interview with the elders at Miletus, his Epistles to the Philippians, to the Hebrews, and to Philemon, in which he promised to visit them, must likewise have been written before the interview: for his declaration respected the Philippians, the Hebrews, and Philemon, as well as the Ephesians; for they certainly were persons among whom the apostle had gone preaching the kingdom of God: yet no commentator ever thought the epistles above mentioned were written to them before the apostle's interview with the Ephesian elders. On the contrary, it is universally acknowledged that these epistles were written four years after the interview; namely, during the apostle's first imprisonment at Rome. When therefore he told the Ephesian elders, that they and his other converts, among whom he had gone preaching the kingdom of God, should see his face no more, as it was no point either of faith or practice which he spake, he may well be supposed to have declared nothing but his own opinion resulting from his fears. He had lately escaped the rage of the Jews, who laid wait for him in Cenchrea to kill him, Acts xx. 3. This, with their fury on former occasions, filled him with such anxiety, that in writing to the Romans from Corinth, he requested them *to strive together with him in their prayers, that he might be delivered from the unbelieving in Judea*, Rom. xv. 30, 31.—Further, that in his speech to the Ephesian elders, the apostle only declared his own persuasion, dictated by his fears, and not any suggestion of the Spirit, Dr. Macknight thinks, is plain from what he had said immediately before, verse 22, *Behold I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things which shall befall me there*; 23, *Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me*. Wherefore, although his fears were happily disappointed, and he actually visited the Ephesians after his release, his character as an inspired apostle is not hurt in the least; if in saying,

he knew they should see his face no more, he declared his own persuasion only, and no dictate of the Holy Spirit *.

We conclude therefore that Saint Paul wrote his first Epistle to Timothy about the end of the year 64.

III. But whatever uncertainty may have prevailed concerning the date of this Epistle, it has always been acknowledged to be the undisputed production of the apostle Paul. *Both the first and second Epistles to Timothy* are cited or alluded to by the apostolical fathers, Clement of Rome† and Polycarp‡; and the first Epistle by Ignatius§; and in the following centuries by Irenæus||, Clement of Alexandria**, Tertullian††, Caius‡‡, Origen§§, and by all subsequent ecclesiastical writers without exception.

IV. Timothy having been left at Ephesus, to regulate the affairs of the church in that city, Saint Paul wrote this Epistle chiefly to instruct him in the choice of proper officers in the church, as well as in the exercise of a regular ministry. Another and very important part of the apostle's design was to caution this young evangelist against the influence of those false teachers (Michaelis thinks they were Essenes), who, by their subtle distinctions and endless controversies, had corrupted the purity and simplicity of the Gospel; to press upon him, in all his preaching, a constant regard to the interests of practical religion; and to animate him to the greatest diligence, fidelity, and zeal, in the discharge of his office. The Epistle therefore consists of three parts; viz.

PART 1. The introduction (i. 1—2).

PART 2. Instructions to Timothy how to behave in the administration of the church at Ephesus, in which,

SECT. 1. After reminding Timothy of the charge which had been committed to him, viz. To preserve the purity of the Gospel against the pernicious doctrines of the false

* Dr. Benson's Preface to 1 Tim. (pp. 220—222). Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 75—78. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 316—320; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 292—294. Doddridge and Whitby's Prefaces to 1 Tim. Macknight's Preface to 1 Tim. sect. ii. Dr. Paley has advocated the late date of this epistle by arguments similar to those above stated. *Horæ Paulinæ*, pp. 288—294.

† Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 38, 39; 4to, vol. i. pp. 298—299.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 96, 97; 4to, vol. i. pp. 330, 331.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 78, 79; 4to, vol. i. p. 321.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 164; 4to, vol. i. p. 368.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 224; 4to, vol. i. p. 401.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 264, 265; 4to, vol. i. p. 424.

‡‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 374; 4to, vol. i. p. 483.

§§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 471; 4to, vol. i. p. 535.

teachers (enumerated above*), whose opinions led to frivolous controversies, and not to a holy life, Saint Paul shows the use of the law of Moses, of which these teachers were ignorant. This account of the law, he assures Timothy, was agreeable to the representation of it in the Gospel, with the preaching of which he was intrusted (i. 3—11). Having mentioned the Gospel, the apostle, in the fulness of his heart, makes a digression to express his gratitude to God in calling him, who had been a persecutor to the Christian faith and ministerial office; and observes, that this favour was extended to him, though so unworthy, as an encouragement to all that should believe in every future age (12—20).

SECT. 2. Saint Paul then proceeds to give Timothy particular instructions,

- i. Concerning the manner in which divine worship was to be performed in the Ephesian church (ii).
- ii. Concerning the qualifications of the persons whom he was to ordain bishops and deacons of that church (iii).
- iii. After foretelling the great corruptions which were to prevail in the church in future times (iv. 1—5), the apostle instructs Timothy,
 1. How to support the sacred character (6—16).
 2. How to admonish aged men and women (v. 1—2), and in what manner he should treat widows (3—16), elders (17—19), and offenders (20, 21). Annexed are some instructions to Timothy himself (22—24).
 3. Concerning the duties of slaves (vi. 1, 2).

SECT. 3. condemns trifling controversies and pernicious disputes, censures the excessive love of money, and charges the rich, to be rich in good works (vi. 3—19).

PART 4. The conclusion (20, 21).

V. Although the errors of the judaizing teachers at Ephesus, which gave rise to Saint Paul's Epistles to Timothy, have long disappeared, yet "the Epistles themselves are still of great use, as they serve to show the impiety of the principles from which these errors proceeded. For the same principles are apt in every age to produce errors and vices, which, though different in name from those which prevailed in Ephesus in the apostle's days, are precisely of the same kind, and equally pernicious.—These Epistles are likewise of great use in the

* See p. 551. *supra*.

church, as they exhibit to Christian bishops and deacons, in every age, the most perfect idea of the duties of their function; teach the manner in which these duties should be performed; describe the qualifications necessary in those who aspire to such holy and honourable offices, and explain the ends for which these offices were originally instituted, and are still continued in the church.

The very same things, indeed, the apostle, about the same time, wrote to Titus in Crete; but more briefly, because he was an older and more experienced minister than Timothy. Nevertheless the repetition of these precepts and charges, is not without its use to the church still, as it maketh us more deeply sensible of their great importance: not to mention, that in the Epistle to Titus, there are things peculiar to itself, which enhance its value. In short, the Epistles to Timothy and Titus taken together, containing a full account of the qualifications and duties of the ministers of the Gospel, may be considered as a complete body of divinely inspired *ecclesiastical canons*, to be observed by the Christian clergy of all communions, to the end of the world.

These Epistles, therefore, ought to be read frequently, and with the greatest attention, by those in every age and country, who hold sacred offices, or who have it in view to obtain them; not only that they may regulate their conduct according to the directions contained in them, but that, by meditating seriously on the solemn charges delivered to all the ministers of the Gospel, in the persons of Timothy and Titus, their minds may be strongly impressed with a sense of the importance of their function, and of the obligation which lieth on them to be faithful in discharging every duty belonging to it.

It is of importance also to observe, that, in these Epistles, there are some explications of the Christian doctrines, and some displays of Saint Paul's views and expectations as an apostle of Christ, which merit our attention. For if he had been, like many of the Greek philosophers, an hypocrite who held a double doctrine, one for the vulgar, and another for the learned; and if his secret views and expectations had been different from those which he publicly professed to the world, he would have given, without all doubt, some insinuation thereof in letters written to such intimate friends. Yet, throughout the whole of these Epistles, no discovery of that kind is made. The doctrine contained in them is the same with that taught in the Epistles designed for the inspection and direction of the church in general; and the views and hopes which he expresses, are

the same with those which he uniformly taught mankind to entertain. What stronger proofs can we desire of the apostle's sincerity and faithfulness than these *?"

* Dr. Macknight's Pref. to 1 Tim. sect. iv.

SECTION XIII.

ON THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

I. *Date*;—II. *Of the place where Timothy was, when Saint Paul wrote this Epistle to him*;—III. *Its scope*;—IV. *Synopsis of its contents*;—V. *Observations on this Epistle*.

I. **THAT** Saint Paul was a prisoner when he wrote the second Epistle to Timothy, is evident from i. 8. 12. 16. and ii. 9; and that his imprisonment was in Rome appears from i. 17, and is universally admitted. But, whether he wrote it during his *first* imprisonment, recorded in Acts xxviii. or during a *second* imprisonment there (which was the uniform tradition of the primitive church), is a point that has been much disputed. The former opinion is advocated by Drs. Hammond, Lightfoot, and Lardner; and the latter, by Drs. Benson, Macknight, and Paley, Bishop Tomline, Michaelis, Rosenmüller, and others. That the last-mentioned opinion is the most correct, we think will appear from the following considerations.

1. A collation of the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon (which are known to have been written during Saint Paul's *first* imprisonment), with the second Epistle to Timothy, will show that this Epistle was not written during the time when those Epistles were written. In the former Epistles, the author confidently looked forward to his liberation from confinement, and his speedy departure from Rome. He tells the Philippians (ii. 24), "I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly." Philemon he bids to prepare for him a lodging; "for I trust," says he, "that through your prayers I shall be given unto you" (ver. 22). In the Epistle before us, he holds a language extremely different: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day" (iv. 6—8).

Again, when the former Epistles were written from Rome, Timothy was with Saint Paul; and he is joined with him in writing to the Colossians, the Philippians, and to Philemon. The present Epistle implies that he was absent. Further, in the former Epistles, Demas was with Saint Paul at Rome: "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you." In the Epistle now before us: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is gone to Thessalonica." Once more: in the former Epistle, Mark was with Saint Paul, and joins in saluting the Colossians. In the present Epistle, Timothy is ordered to bring him with him, "for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (iv. 11).

2. The circumstances of Saint Paul's imprisonment, as referred to in this Epistle, are widely different from the imprisonment related in Acts xxviii. 30, 31. Then he was permitted to dwell alone in his own hired house, and receive all who came to him, and publicly to preach the Gospel, being guarded only by a single soldier. But it appears from 2 Tim. i. 16—18. that Saint Paul was in *close* confinement, so that Onesiphorus, on his coming to Rome, had considerable difficulty in finding him out. And that crimes were now laid to his charge, very different from those formerly alleged against him, appears from ii. 9; where he says that he *suffers evil, even unto bonds, as a malefactor*; plainly implying that he was not only abridged of all liberty, but also that he was bound, hands and feet, in a close dungeon. Dr. Macknight thinks this was probably under the pretence that he was one of those Christians whom Nero accused of having set Rome on fire. Hence the word *malefactor* (*κακούργος*), which in this passage may mean that the apostle was treated as one of the worst of criminals.

3. The situation of Saint Paul, when he wrote this Epistle, was extremely dangerous. This appears from 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, 8, and from verse 16, where, at his first answer, all men forsook him." Further, (verse 17), "the Lord delivered him from the mouth of the lion," or the cruelty of Nero. And in verse 18. he hopes "the Lord will deliver him from every evil work, by preserving him unto his heavenly kingdom." This was totally different from the gentle treatment recorded in Acts xxviii., and shows that this Epistle was written at a later period than the two years' imprisonment mentioned by Saint Luke.

4. It appears from 2 Tim. iv. 13. 20. that when the apostle wrote, he had lately been at Troas, Miletus, and Corinth. This was a different route from that described in the Acts. Also in 2 Tim. iv. 13. he desires Timothy to bring with him a trunk and some books which he had left at Troas.

But in his journey to Italy in Acts xxvii. he did not come near Troas. It is true he visited that place on his way to Jerusalem, (Acts xx. 5—7). But as this visit to Troas happened in the year 57, and the present Epistle was not written before the year 65, these articles were not then left there; for he would hardly have delayed sending for them for seven or eight years. He would rather have sent for them to Cæsarea, where he was in prison two years; or more early, on his first coming to Rome.

5. When he wrote this Epistle, he had left Trophimus sick at Miletus (iv. 20). But this could not have happened on the journey to Jerusalem, because Trophimus was with Saint Paul at Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 29), and in his voyage from Cæsarea to Italy he did not touch at Miletus. It is obvious, contrary to Dr. Lardner's hypothesis, that the north wind would not suffer them to proceed further north from Cnidus along the coast of Asia (Acts xxvii. 7).

6. Saint Paul says (2 Tim. iv. 20.) that Erastus staid behind at Corinth. The apostle must therefore have passed through Corinth, on that journey to Rome, after which he wrote this Epistle. But from Cæsarea to Italy, in Acts xxviii. he did not pass through Corinth. Dr. Lardner's two objections to this argument are not satisfactory. For he says that Erastus staid behind at Corinth when Saint Paul left that city to go to Jerusalem, though Timothy, who was then with Saint Paul, must have known that circumstance, but Saint Paul only wished to remind him of it—or, he mentions his stay, because he was sent by Saint Paul from Ephesus into Macedonia (Acts xix. 22); and when Saint Paul, going there also, returned to Asia Minor, he did not return with him, not being mentioned in Acts xx. 4.

The result of the preceding observations is, that this Epistle was written by Saint Paul at Rome, and during an imprisonment different from that recorded in Acts xxviii. Saint Paul, we have seen *, was released from his first confinement A. D. 63, and, after visiting several churches, returned to Rome early in 65; where, after being confined rather more than a year, it is generally agreed that he suffered martyrdom A. D. 66. Now, as the apostle requests Timothy to come to him before winter (2 Tim. iv. 21), it is probable that this Epistle was written in the month of July or August A. D. 65 †.

* See pp. 490, 491. *supra*.

† Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, pp. 303—305. Macknight's Preface to 2 Tim. sect. 1. Dr. Benson's Preface to 2 Tim. pp. 501—517. Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 165—177. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 338—375; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 303—321.

II. It is generally supposed that Timothy was at Ephesus when Saint Paul wrote his second Epistle to him. This opinion is advocated by Drs. Lardner, Benson, and Macknight, but is opposed by Michaelis; who has shown that Timothy was most probably somewhere in Asia Minor when Saint Paul sent this letter to him, because the apostle, towards the close of the first chapter, mentions several persons who dwelt in that region, and also because (2 Tim. iv. 13) he requests Timothy to bring with him "the cloak, books, and parchments," which he had left behind him at Troas; and because Troas does not lie in the route from Ephesus to Rome, to which city Timothy was desired to "make haste to come to him before winter" (iv. 21). Michaelis concludes therefore that Saint Paul, not knowing exactly where Timothy was, wrote to him this Epistle, which he intrusted to a safe person, (whom Dr. Benson supposes to have been Tychicus), that was travelling into Asia Minor, with an order to deliver it to him wherever he might find him*.

III. The immediate design of Saint Paul, in writing this Epistle to Timothy, was, to apprise him of the circumstances that had befallen him during his second imprisonment at Rome, and to request him to come to him before the ensuing winter. But, being uncertain whether he should live so long, he gave him in this letter a variety of advices, charges, and encouragements, for the faithful discharge of his ministerial functions, with the solemnity and affection of a dying parent; in order that, if he should be put to death before Timothy's arrival, the loss might in some measure be compensated to him by the instructions contained in this admirable Epistle. With this view he exhorts him to stir up the gift which had been conferred upon him (2 Tim. i. 2—5); not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of Paul's sufferings (6—16); to hold fast the form of sound words, and to guard inviolable that good deposit of Gospel doctrine (i. 13, 14), which he was to commit to faithful men who should be able to teach others (ii. 1, 2); to animate him to endure, with fortitude, persecutions for the sake of the Gospel (ii. 3—13); to suppress and avoid logomachies (14. 23); to approve himself a faithful minister of the word (15—22); and to forewarn him of the perils of the last days, in consequence of wicked hypocritical seducers and enemies of the truth, who even then

* Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 161—164.

were beginning to rise in the church. These Saint Paul admonishes Timothy to flee, giving him various cautions against them (iii).

IV. The Epistle therefore consists of three parts, viz.

PART 1. The inscription (i. 1—5).

PART 2. An exhortation to Timothy,

(1.) To diligence, patience, and firmness in keeping the form of sound doctrine, in which is introduced an affecting prayer in behalf of Onesiphorus (i. 2—18).

(2.) To fortitude under afflictions and persecutions, to deliver the uncorrupted doctrine of the Gospel to others, and to purity of life (ii).

(3.) To beware of false teachers in the last times, whose practices are described, to be constant in his profession of the Gospel, and to be diligent in his ministerial labours (iii. iv. 1—8).

PART 3. The conclusion, containing the apostle's request to Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, together with various salutations for the brethren in Asia Minor (iv. 9—22).

V. As this Epistle was written to Saint Paul's most intimate friend, under the miseries of a gaol and the near prospect of death, and was not designed for the use of others, it may serve to exhibit the temper and character of Saint Paul, and to convince us that he was no deceiver, but sincerely believed the doctrines which he preached. "This excellent writing, therefore, will be read by the disciples of Christ to the end of the world, with the highest satisfaction. And the impression which it must have on their minds, will often be recollected by them with the greatest effect, for the confirmation of their faith in the Gospel, and their consolation under all the evils which their adherence to the Gospel may bring upon them".

"Imagine", says Dr. Benson, "a pious father, under sentence of death for his piety and benevolence to mankind, writing to a dutiful and affectionate son, that he might see and embrace him again before he left the world; particularly that he might leave with him his dying commands, and charge him to live and suffer as he had done:—And you will have the frame of the apostle's mind, during the writing of this whole Epistle". *

* Preface to 2 Tim. p. 517. The topics above noticed are ably treated at length by Dr. Macknight in his Preface to 2 Tim. sect. 3.

SECTION XIV.

ON THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

- I. *Account of Titus*;—II. *Christianity when planted in Crete*;—
 III. *Date*;—IV. *Scope and analysis of this Epistle*;—V. *Observations on it.*

1. **TITUS** was a Greek (Dr. Benson thinks he was a native of Antioch in Syria), and one of Saint Paul's early converts, who attended him and Barnabas to the first council at Jerusalem, A. D. 49, and afterwards on his ensuing circuit (Tit. i. 4. Gal. ii. 1—3. Acts xv. 2). Some years after this we find that Paul sent him to Corinth (2 Cor. xii. 18), to investigate and report to him the state of the church in that city, and particularly to report what effect had been produced by his first Epistle to the Corinthians. The intelligence brought to Paul by Titus afforded him the highest satisfaction, as it far exceeded all his expectations (vii. 6—13). And as Titus had expressed a particular regard for the Corinthians, the apostle thought proper to send him back again, with some others, to hasten the collection for the poor brethren in Judea (viii. 6). After this, we meet with no further notice of Titus; he is mentioned in this Epistle as having been with Saint Paul in Crete (Tit. i. 5). How highly he was esteemed by the great apostle of the Gentiles, is evident from the affectionate manner in which he has spoken of him to the Corinthians*. Whether Titus ever quitted Crete, we know not; neither have we any certain information concerning the time, place, or manner of his death; but, according to antient ecclesiastical tradition, he lived to the age of ninety-four years, and died and was buried in that island.

II. We have no certain information when or by whom Christianity was first planted in Crete. As some Cretans were present at the first effusion of the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem (Acts ii. 11), Bishop Tomline thinks it not improbable, that, on their return home, they might be the means of introducing the Gospel among their countrymen†. But Michaelis, Dr. Hales, and many other critics, are of opinion that Christianity was first planted there by Saint Paul, during the year and a

* See particularly 2 Cor. ii. 13. vii. 6, 7. 13—15. viii. 16—23. and xii. 18.

† Elements of Christian Theology, vol. i. p. 446.

half that he spent at Corinth, between the latter part of A. D. 51, and the former part of A. D. 53. It appears from 2 Cor. xii. 14. and xiii. 1, that the apostle did make an excursion during this interval, and returned to Corinth. In this excursion it is supposed that he made a voyage to Crete, in order to preach the Gospel there, and took Titus with him as an assistant, whom he left behind to regulate the concerns of that church (Tit. i. 5). Josephus informs us that there were many Jews * in this island at the time Saint Paul wrote this Epistle to Titus. The Cretans were formerly notorious for piracy, luxury, debauchery, and especially for lying. So infamous were they for their habitual practice of falsehood, that *κρητιζειν*, to act like a Cretan, was a proverbial term for telling a lie. With these vices they were charged by Epimenides, one of their own poets; and Saint Paul has quoted him as expressing their true character (Tit. i. 12).

III. No date is so controverted as that of Saint Paul's Epistle to Titus. Michaelis, who thinks it was written soon after his supposed visit to Crete, is of opinion, that, in the chronological arrangement of Saint Paul's Epistles, it should be placed between the second Epistle to the Thessalonians (A. D. 52.) and the first Epistle to the Corinthians (A. D. 57). Dr. Hales accordingly dates this Epistle in A. D. 52; Dr. Lardner, in 56; Lord Barrington, in 57; Dr. Benson and Bishop Tomline, in 64; and Bishop Pearson, Drs. Whitby and Paley, and the Bible chronology, in A. D. 65. The subscription states this Epistle to have been written from Nicopolis of Macedonia, probably because Saint Paul desired to meet him at a city called Nicopolis, but which could not be the place intended by the author of the subscription: for the Nicopolis referred to by him was situated on the river Nessus in Thrace, and was not built till *after* this period, by the emperor Trajan. As Saint Luke is totally silent concerning Saint Paul's preaching at Crete, though he has noticed that he touched at the Fair Havens and Lasea in his first voyage to Rome, it is most probable that this Epistle was written after his liberation from his first imprisonment, A. D. 64. And this opinion is strengthened by the verbal harmony subsisting between Saint Paul's first Epistle to Timothy and the letter to Titus; which cannot be naturally accounted for, but by supposing that they were both written about the same time, and while the same ideas and

* Ant. Jud. lib. xvii. c. 12. § 1. De Bell. Jud. lib. ii. c. 7. § 1, &c.

phrases were present to the writer's mind *. The genuineness and authenticity of the Epistle to Titus were never questioned †.

IV. Titus having been left in Crete to settle the churches in the several cities of that island according to the apostolical plan, Saint Paul wrote this Epistle to him, that he might discharge his ministry among the Cretans with the greater success, and to give him particular instructions concerning his behaviour towards the judaizing teachers, who endeavoured to pervert the faith and disturb the peace of the Christian church. The Epistle therefore consists of four parts.

1. The inscription (i. 1—4).

2. Instructions to Titus.

(1). Concerning the ordination of elders, that is, of bishops and deacons, whose qualifications are enumerated (5—9). Further, to show Titus how cautious he ought to be in selecting men for the sacred office, Paul reminds him of the acts of the judaizing teachers (10—16).

(2). To accommodate his exhortations to the respective ages, sexes, and circumstances of those whom he was commissioned to instruct; and, to give the greater weight to his instructions, he admonishes him to be an example of what he taught (ii).

(3). To inculcate obedience to the civil magistrate, in opposition to the Jews and judaizing teachers, who, being averse from all civil governors, except such as were of their own nation, were apt to imbue Gentile Christians with a like seditious spirit, as if it were an indignity for the people of God to obey an idolatrous magistrate; and also to enforce gentleness to all men (iii. 1—7).

(4). To enforce good works, avoid foolish questions, and to shun heretics (iii. 8—11).

3. An invitation to Titus, to come to the apostle at Nicopolis, together with various directions (iii. 12—15).

V. From a comparison of the Epistle of Titus, with the two Epistles to Timothy, Dr. Macknight remarks, we learn that the judaizing teachers were every where indefatigable in propagating their erroneous doctrine concerning the necessity of obedience to

* Among other instances, that might be adduced, compare 1 Tim. i. 1—3. with Tit. i. 4, 5. 1 Tim. i. 4. with Tit. i. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 12. with Tit. ii. 7, 15, and 1 Tim. iii. 2—4. with Tit. i. 6—8.

† It is cited or alluded to by all the fathers who have quoted the two Epistles to Timothy. See the references to them in p. 554, *supra*.

the law of Moses, as the only means of obtaining salvation; that in the most distant countries they uniformly taught the same doctrine, for the purpose of rendering the practice of sin consistent with the hope of salvation; and that, in order to draw disciples after them, they encouraged them in sin by the vicious practices which they themselves followed, in the persuasion that they would be pardoned by the efficacy of the Levitical sacrifices. That eminent critic thinks it probable, from the apostle's commanding Titus in Crete, and Timothy in Ephesus, to oppose those errors, that the judaizing teachers were more numerous and successful in Ephesus and Crete than in other places. As, however, Titus was a Gentile convert, whose interest it was to maintain the freedom of the Gentiles from the law of Moses, and also a teacher of long standing in the faith, Saint Paul was not so full in his directions and exhortations to him, as to Timothy: neither did he recommend to him meekness, lenity, and patience in teaching, as he did to Timothy, but rather sharpness (Tit. i. 13. ii. 13). Dr. Macknight accounts for this difference in the apostle's letters to those two evangelists, by supposing that Titus was a person of a soft and mild temper; whereas Timothy, being a younger man, might have been of a more ardent spirit that stood in need of some restraint*.

* Dr. Macknight's Preface to Titus, sect. 4. *fine*.

SECTION XV.

ON THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

I. *Account of Philemon*;—II. *Date*;—III. *Genuineness and authenticity*;—IV. *Occasion and scope of this Epistle*;—V. *Observations on it*.

I. PHILEMON was an inhabitant of Colossæ, as appears from Saint Paul's mentioning Onesimus in his Epistle to the Colossians (iv. 9), as *one of them*, and also from his saluting Archippus in this Epistle (ver. 2), who appears from Col. iv. 17. to have been a pastor of that church. Philemon seems to have been a person of great worth as a man, and of some note as a citizen in his own country: for his family was so numerous, that it made a church by itself, or at least a considerable part of the church at Colossæ (ver. 2). He was likewise so opu-

lent, that he was able *by the communication of his faith*, that is, by his beneficence, to refresh the bowels of the Saints (6, 7). According to Grotius, Philemon was an elder of Ephesus; Beausobre and Dr. Doddridge suppose him to have been one of the ministers of the Colossian church; and from Saint Paul's requesting him (22) to provide a lodging for him at Colossæ, Michaelis thinks that he was a deacon of that church. These opinions appear to have been founded on the inscription of this Epistle, where Saint Paul calls him a fellow-labourer. But this appellation, both Drs. Whitby, Lardner, and Macknight have remarked, is of ambiguous signification; being given not only to those who were employed in preaching the Gospel, but also to such pious individuals, of either sex, as assisted the apostles in any manner*.

Philemon was, most probably, a converted Gentile, and from the nineteenth verse of this Epistle, some have supposed that he was converted under the ministry of Saint Paul: but, from the apostle's saying in the fifth verse that he had *heard* of Philemon's faith in Christ, (which was his usual phrase when writing to Christians whom he had never seen †), Dr. Benson is of opinion that, during Paul's long stay at Ephesus, some of the Colossians had gone thither, and heard him preach the Christian doctrine (Acts xix. 10. xx. 31): or that the apostle had sent some of his assistants who had planted the Gospel at Colossæ. If Saint Paul had not come into those parts of Asia Minor, it is highly probable that Philemon would never have become a Christian; the apostle might therefore well say, that Philemon owed unto him, himself, or his own soul.

II. It appears from verses i. 10. 13. and 23. of this Epistle, that Saint Paul was under confinement when he wrote it; and as he expresses (22) his expectation of being shortly released, it is probable that it was written during his first imprisonment at Rome, towards the end of A. D. 62, or early in 63; and was sent, together with the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, by Tychicus and Onesimus.

III. So early as the time of Jerome, some fastidious critics showed an inclination to expunge this Epistle from the sacred canon, as being a private letter, and consequently of very little importance to the Christian church. Unquestionably the apostles might (and, for aught we know to the contrary, did) write *private* letters as well as other persons. But we have

* See instances of this in Rom. xvi. 2. and 3 John 8.

† See Eph. i. 15. iii. 2. Col. i. 4. and ii. 1.

no reason to consider the Epistle to Philemon in this light: it was wholly written with the apostle's *own* hand, which was much more than what he called the *token in all his Epistles* (2 Thess. iii. 17). Although from its brevity, and the private nature of its subject, it was but rarely mentioned by the primitive ecclesiastical writers, yet we know that it was alluded to, though not cited by name, by Tertullian *, and was reckoned among Saint Paul's Epistles by Caius †. It was likewise most expressly quoted by Origen ‡, and was pronounced to be authentic by all the antient writers cited by Eusebius §, as also by all subsequent ecclesiastical writers; and it has always been inserted in every catalogue of the books of the New Testament. Stronger external testimony to the authenticity of any part of the Bible exists not, than that which we have for the Epistle to Philemon, the argument of which is not mean, nor is any part of it unworthy of the great apostle of the Gentiles.

“Whoever,” says Dr. Benson, “will carefully study it, will discern a great number of the doctrines and precepts of Christianity expressed or insinuated: for instance, 1. In a religious view, or upon a spiritual account, all Christians are upon a level. Onesimus, the slave, upon becoming a Christian, is the apostle's dear son and Philemon's brother. 2. Christianity makes no alteration in men's civil affairs. By Christian baptism a slave did not become a freedman; his temporal estate or condition was still the same; and, though Onesimus was the apostle's son and Philemon's brother upon a religious account, yet he was obliged to be Philemon's slave for ever, unless his master voluntarily gave him his freedom. 3. Servants should not be taken or detained from their own masters without their masters' consent (see ver. 13, 14). 4. We should love and do good unto all men. We should not condemn persons of low estate, nor disdain to help the meanest slave when it is in our power. The apostle has here set us an example of benevolence, condescension, and Christian charity, which it well becomes us to follow. He took pains with and converted a slave, and in a most affectionate and earnest manner interceded with his master for his pardon. 5. We should not utterly despair of those who are wicked, but should use our best endeavours to reclaim them. Though Onesimus had robbed his master and run away from him, the apostle attempted his

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 465; 4to, vol. i. p. 424.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 274; 4to, vol. i. p. 482.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 472; 4to, vol. i. p. 535.

§ Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 25.

conversion among others, and succeeded therein. 6. Restitution is due where an injury has been done, unless the injured party freely forgive: accordingly, the apostle Paul gives a promise, under his own hand, for Onesimus's making restitution, as a matter of justice, if Philemon insisted upon it. 7. We should be grateful to our benefactors. This Saint Paul touches upon very gently (ver. 19), where he intimates to Philemon that he owed unto him himself also: and therefore, in point of gratitude, he was obliged to grant his request. 8. We should forgive the penitent, and be heartily reconciled to them. 9. The apostle's example teaches us to do all we can to make up quarrels and differences, and reconcile those who are at variance. 10. A wise man chooses sometimes to address in a soft and obliging manner, even in cases where there is authority to command. 11. The bishops and pastors of the Christian church, and all teachers of religion, have here the most glorious example set before them, to induce them to have a most tender regard to the souls of men of all ranks and conditions; and to endeavour to convert a slave, as well as the rich and great and honourable of the earth. He who disdained not to teach a slave, a fugitive, and a thief, but preached the doctrine of salvation to him, and took pains with him, till he had restored him to his master, an honest worthy man;—how disinterested must he have been? To whom would he not condescend? Or whose salvation and happiness would he not endeavour to promote? Would to God there was the same spirit in all the teachers of Christianity, at all times and in all places! 12. Here is a most glorious proof of the good effects of Christianity, where it is rightly understood and sincerely embraced. It transforms a worthless slave and thief into a pious, virtuous, amiable, and useful man; makes him not only happier and better in himself, but a better servant, and better in all relations and circumstances whatever.

“ Shall an epistle, so full of useful and excellent instructions, be rejected for its brevity? or because the occasion required that it should be written concerning one particular person? or addressed to a private man? Men would do well to examine it carefully before they reject it, or speak of it so slightly.” *

IV. We learn from this Epistle that Onesimus was the slave of Philemon, whom he had probably robbed †, and ran away

* Dr. Benson's History of the First Planting of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 311. 2d edit.

† Macknight and Lardner are of opinion that Saint Paul's expression in the eighteenth verse does not insinuate that Onesimus had *robbed* his master of any thing but his service.

from him as far as Rome. Whether he repented of what he had done, and voluntarily went to Saint Paul, or in what other manner they came to meet there, we have no information. But the apostle, during his confinement ‘in his own hired house’, opened a way to the heart of the rude slave, converted him to the Christian faith, and baptized him. It also appears that Paul kept Onesimus with him for some time, to wait upon himself, until Onesimus, by his conduct, confirmed the truth and sincerity of his conversion. During his abode with the apostle, he served him with the greatest assiduity and affection: but, being sensible of his fault in running away from his master, he wished to repair that injury by returning to him. At the same time being afraid lest, on his return, his master should inflict upon him the punishment which by the law or custom of Phrygia was due to a fugitive slave *, he entreated Saint Paul to write to Philemon in his behalf, and request him to forgive and receive him again into his family. The apostle therefore wrote this Epistle to Philemon, “in which, with the greatest softness of expression, warmth of affection, and delicacy of address, he not only interceded for Onesimus’s pardon, but urged Philemon to esteem him and put confidence in him as a sincere Christian. And because restitution, by repairing the injury that has been done, restores the person who did the injury to the character which he had lost, the apostle, to enable Onesimus to appear in Philemon’s family with some degree of reputation, bound himself in this Epistle by his handwriting, not only to repay all that Onesimus owed to Philemon, but to make full reparation also to Philemon for whatever injury he had done to him by running away” †. To account for the solicitude expressed by Saint Paul in this Epistle, in order to obtain Onesimus’s pardon, and procure a thorough reconciliation, it is not necessary to suppose, with some critics, that Philemon was keen and obstinate in his resentments, or of that rough and intractable disposition for which the Phrygians were proverbial. The contrary is insinuated by the apostle, who has in other places commended his benevolence and charity. It is most probable, as Dr. Macknight has conjectured, that Philemon had a number of slaves, on whom the pardoning of Onesimus too easily might have had a bad effect; and therefore he might judge some punishment necessary as an example to the rest. At least Saint

* Grotius informs us that masters had a power to torture their slaves who behaved ill, and even to put them to death, without applying to the magistrate; and that this was agreeable not only to the Roman, but also to the Grecian law.

† Macknight’s Preface to Philemon, sect. 2.

Paul could not have considered the pardoning of Onesimus as an affair that merited so much earnest entreaty, with a person of Philemon's piety, benevolence, and gratitude, unless he had suspected him to have entertained some such intention.

V. Whether Philemon pardoned or punished Onesimus, is a circumstance concerning which we have no information. From the earnestness with which the apostle solicited his pardon, and from the generosity and goodness of Philemon's disposition, the eminent critic above cited conjectures that he actually pardoned Onesimus, and even gave him his freedom, in compliance with the apostle's insinuation, as it is interpreted by some, that *he would do more than he had asked*. For it was no uncommon thing, in antient times, to bestow freedom on those slaves whose faithful services had procured for them the esteem and goodwill of their masters. The primitive Christians preserving this Epistle, and placing it in the sacred canon, (Dr. Benson remarks) are strong arguments to induce us to believe that Philemon granted the apostle's request, and received Onesimus into his house and favour again. As Onesimus was particularly recommended by Saint Paul to the notice of the Colossians (iv. 9), it cannot be doubted that they cheerfully received him into their church. In the apostolical constitutions * Onesimus is said to have been bishop of Beræa; but they are a compilation of the fourth century, and consequently of no authority. When Ignatius wrote his Epistle to the Ephesians (A. D. 107), their bishop's name was Onesimus; and Grotius thought that he was the person for whom Saint Paul interceded. But this, as Dr. Lardner† remarks, is not certain. Dr. Mill‡ has mentioned a copy, at the conclusion of which it is said that Onesimus suffered martyrdom at Rome by having his legs broken.

The whole of this Epistle is indeed a most beautiful composition. Such deference and respect to Philemon, such affection and concern for Onesimus, such distant but just insinuation, such a genteel and fine address, pervade the whole, that this alone might be sufficient to convince us that Saint Paul was neither unacquainted with the world, nor that weak and visionary enthusiast, which the enemies of revelation have sometimes represented him to be.

It is impossible to peruse this admirable Epistle without being touched with the delicacy of sentiment, and the masterly

* Lib. viii. c. 46.

† Works, 8vo, vol. vi. p. 381; 4to, vol. iii. p. 324.

‡ Nov. Test. Millii et Kusteri, p. 513.

address that appear in every part of it. We see here, in a most striking light, how perfectly consistent true politeness is, not only with all the warmth and sincerity of the friend, but even with the dignity of the Christian and the apostle. And if this letter were to be considered in no other point of view than as a mere human composition, it must be allowed to be a masterpiece in its kind. As an illustration of this remark, it may not be improper to compare it with an Epistle of the younger Pliny *, that seems to have been written on a similar occasion; which, though composed by one who has always been reckoned to excel in the epistolary style, and though it undoubtedly has many beauties, yet it must be acknowledged by every impartial reader to be vastly inferior to this animated composition of the apostle †.

* Lib. ix. ep. 21.

† Doddridge, Introd. to Philemon. Dr. Paley has some beautiful observations on this Epistle in his *Horæ Paulinæ*, pp. 334—336.

SECTION XVI.

ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

- I. *To whom written*; — II. *In what language*; — III. *Its genuineness and authenticity*; — *Proofs that it was written by Saint Paul*; — IV. *Its Date*; — V. *Occasion and scope of this Epistle*; — VI. *Synopsis of its contents*.

I. AFTER the thirteen Epistles avowedly written by Saint Paul, with his name prefixed to them, succeeds what we call the Epistle to the Hebrews; the nature and authenticity of which has been more controverted, perhaps, than any other book of the New Testament. As the initiatory formula, usual in the other apostolical letters, is wanting in this Epistle, (notwithstanding the superscription terms it *the Epistle to the Hebrews*), it has been questioned whether it was really an Epistle sent to a particular community, or only a discourse or dissertation intended for general readers. Michaelis determines that it is an Epistle, and remarks that not only the second person plural *ye* incessantly occurs in it, which alone indeed would be no proof, but also that the author alludes to special circumstances in this writing in chapters v. 11, 12. vi. 9. x. 32—34, and above all in chapter xiii. 23, 24, which

contains the promise of a visit, and various salutations; all which circumstances taken together show that it really is an apostolical Epistle.

Who the Hebrews were, to whom this letter was addressed, learned men are by no means agreed. Sir Isaac Newton was of opinion, that by 'the Hebrews' in this Epistle we are to understand those Jewish believers who had left Jerusalem a short time before its destruction, and were now dispersed throughout Asia Minor*; but of this we have no authentic record. Others again have imagined that it was addressed to the Hebrew Christians in Spain, Galatia, Macedonia, or at Rome, or to those who resided in Palestine. Clement of Alexandria, Jerome, Euthalius, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, and other fathers, were of opinion that the Epistle to the Hebrews was sent to the converted Jews living in Judea; who in the apostle's days were called Hebrews, to distinguish them from the Jews in the Gentile countries, who were called Hellenists or Grecians (Acts vi. 1. ix. 29. xi. 20). The opinion of these learned fathers is adopted by Beza, Louis Cappel, Carpzov, Drs. Lightfoot, Whitby, Mill, Lardner, and Mac-knight, Bishops Pearson and Tomline, Hallet, Rosenmüller, Scott, and others. Michaelis considers it as written for the use of the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem and in Palestine; and observes that it is a question of little or no moment, whether it was sent to Jerusalem alone, or to other cities in Palestine; because an Epistle intended for the use of Jewish converts at Jerusalem must equally have concerned the other Jewish converts in that country. The very antient opinion last stated is corroborated by the contents of the Epistle itself, in which we meet with many things peculiarly suitable to the believers in Judea.

1. In other Epistles, which were addressed to mixed communities, we meet with frequent exhortations to brotherly love and unity between the converts from Judaism and Heathenism, who are represented as equals, and as brethren: but in the Epistle to the Hebrews there are no such exhortations, which agrees with the hypothesis, that it was sent to Christian communities in Palestine, because these were not mixed communities, but consisted wholly of Jewish converts. It is true that the author speaks of brotherly love (xiii. 1), where he says, 'Let brotherly love continue.' But he speaks here only in general terms, and says nothing of unity between Jewish and Heathen converts in particular. Besides, as the author uses the word

* Observations on the Apocalypse of Saint John, p. 244.

'continue,' we may conclude that in the community, to which he was writing, no disunion had actually taken place among its members.

2. It is evident from the whole tenor of this Epistle, that the persons, to whom it was addressed, were in imminent danger of falling back from Christianity to Judaism, induced partly by a severe persecution, and partly by the false arguments of the rabbins. This could hardly have happened to several communities at the same time, in any other country than Palestine, and therefore we cannot suppose it of several communities of Asia Minor, to which, in the opinion of some commentators, the Epistle was addressed. Christianity enjoyed from the tolerating spirit of the Roman laws and the Roman magistrates, throughout the empire in general, so much religious liberty, that out of Palestine it would have been difficult to have effected a general persecution*. But, through the influence of the Jewish sanhedrim in Jerusalem, the Christians in that country underwent several severe persecutions, especially during the high-priesthood of the younger Ananus, when Saint James and other Christians suffered martyrdom.

3. Further, if we examine the Epistles of Saint Paul, especially those to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, and compare them with the two Epistles of Saint Peter, which were addressed to the Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, we shall find, though mention is made of seducers, not the smallest traces of imminent danger of an apostasy to Judaism, and still less of blasphemy against Christ, as we find in the sixth and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The two passages of this Epistle (vi. 6. x. 29), which relate to blasphemy against Christ, as a person justly condemned and crucified, are peculiarly adapted to the situation of communities in Palestine; and it is difficult to read these passages without inferring that several Christians had really apostatized and openly blasphemed Christ: for it appears from Acts xxvi. 11, that violent measures were taken in Palestine for this very purpose, of which we meet with no traces in any other country at that early age. Neither the Epistles of Saint Paul, nor those of Saint Peter, furnish any instance of a public renunciation of Christianity and return to Judaism: and yet, if any such instances had happened in the communities to which they wrote, these apostles would hardly have passed

* This is evident from the Acts of the Apostles. See also Lardner's *Credibility*, chap. viii. (Works, 8vo, vol. i. pp. 164—201; 4to, vol. i. pp. 90—110.)

them over in silence, or without cautioning other persons against following such examples. The circumstance likewise, to which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews alludes (x. 25), that several, who still continued Christians, forsook the places of public worship, does not occur in any other Epistle, and implies a general and continued persecution, which deterred the Christians from an open confession of their faith. In this melancholy situation, the Hebrews, almost reduced to despair, are referred (x. 25. 35—38.) to the promised coming of Christ, which they are requested to await with patience, as being not far distant. This can be no other than the promised destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. xxiv), of which Christ himself said (Luke xxi. 28), ‘When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.’ Now this coming of Christ was to the Christians in Palestine a deliverance from the yoke with which they were oppressed: but it had no such influence on the Christians of other countries. On the contrary, the first persecution under Nero happened in the year 65, about two years before the commencement of the Jewish war, and the second under Domitian, about five-and-twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem.

4. From ch. xiii. 7, though no mention is made in express terms of martyrs who had suffered in the cause of Christianity, we may with great probability infer that several persons had really suffered, and afforded a noble example to their brethren. If this inference be just, the Hebrews, to whom this Epistle was written, must have been inhabitants of Palestine; for in no other part of the Roman empire, before the year 65, had the enemies of Christianity the power of persecuting its professors in such a manner as to deprive them of their lives, because no Roman court of justice would have condemned a man to death merely for religious opinions; and the pretence of the Jews, that whoever acknowledged Jesus for the Messiah was guilty of treason against the emperor, was too sophistical to be admitted by a Roman magistrate. But in Palestine Stephen and the elder James had already suffered martyrdom (Acts vii. xiii); both Saint Peter and Saint Paul had been in imminent danger of undergoing the same fate (Acts xii. 3—6; xxiii. 11—21. 26. 30); and, according to Josephus *, several

* Ant. Jud. lib. xx. c. 9. § 1. The words of Josephus are as follow: “The younger Ananus, who had obtained the office of high-priest, was a man of desperate character, of the sect of the Sadducees, who, as I have observed in other places, were in general severe in their punishments. This Ananus embraced the opportunity of

other persons were put to death, during the high-priesthood of the younger Ananus, about the year 64 or 65 *.

5. The declarations in Heb. i. 2. and iv. 12, and particularly the exhortation in ii. 1—4, are peculiarly suitable to the believers of Judea, where Jesus Christ himself first taught, and his disciples after him, confirming their testimony with very numerous and conspicuous miracles.

6. The people to whom this Epistle was sent were well acquainted with our Saviour's sufferings, as those of Judea must have been. This appears in Heb. i. 3; ii. 9. 18; v. 7, 8; ix. 14. 28; x. 11; xii. 2, 3; and xiii. 12.

7. The censure in v. 12. is most properly understood of Christians in Jerusalem and Judea, to whom the Gospel was first preached.

8. Lastly, the exhortation in Heb. xiii. 12—14. is very difficult to be explained, on the supposition that the Epistle was written to Hebrews who lived out of Palestine; for neither in the Acts of the Apostles, nor in the other Epistles, do we meet with an instance of expulsion from the synagogue merely for a belief in Christ; on the contrary the apostles themselves were permitted to teach openly in the Jewish assemblies. But if we suppose that the Epistle was written to Jewish converts in Jerusalem, this passage becomes perfectly clear, and, Dr. Lardner observes, must have been very suitable to their case, especially if it was written only a short time before the commencement of the Jewish war, about the year 65 or 66. The Christians, on this supposition, are exhorted to endure their fate with patience, if they should be obliged to retire, or even be ignominiously expelled from Jerusalem, since Christ himself had been forced out of this very city, and had suffered without its walls. It was a city devoted to destruction, and they who fled from it had to expect a better in heaven. The disciples of Christ had been already warned by their Master to flee from Jerusalem (Matt. xxiv. 15—22), and the time assigned for their flight could, when this Epistle was written, be not far distant. That they actually followed his advice, appears from the relation of Eusebius †: and, according to Josephus ‡, the

acting according to his inclination, after the death of Festus, and before the arrival of his successor Albinus. In this interval he constituted a court of justice, and brought before it James, a brother of Jesus who was called Christ, and several others, where they were accused of having violated the law, and were condemned to be stoned to death. But the more moderate part of the city, and they who strictly adhered to the law, disapproved highly of this measure."

* Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 193—197.

† Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. cap. 25.

‡ Bell. Jud. lib. ii. c. 20. § 1.

most sensible inhabitants of Jerusalem took similar measures, after the retreat of Cestius Gallus, which happened in November 66, and likewise left the city. If we suppose, therefore, that the Epistle was written to the Hebrews of Jerusalem, the passage in question is clear: but on the hypothesis, that it was written to Hebrews, who lived in any other place, the words, "*let us go forth with him out of the camp, bearing his reproach,*" lose their meaning. Further (x. 25), 'Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching,' is an additional confirmation of this opinion. The 'approaching day' can mean only the day appointed for the destruction of Jerusalem, and the downfall of the Jewish nation: but this event immediately concerned only the Hebrews of Palestine, and could have no influence in determining the inhabitants of other countries, such as Asia Minor, Greece, and Spain, either to forsake or to frequent the places of public worship*.

To these clear and decisive evidences, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed to Jewish Christians resident in Palestine, it has been objected,

1. That the words in Heb. xii. 4. (*ye have not resisted unto blood, combating against sin*) cannot apply to the church at Jerusalem, where there had already been two martyrs, viz. Stephen and James. But this objection is of no weight: for the apostle was addressing the laity of that church, to whom alone this Epistle was directed, and not to the rulers; and few, if any, of the common people had hitherto been put to death, though they had been imprisoned, pillaged, and defamed. Compare Acts viii. 1—3, xxvi. 10, 11, and 1 Thess. ii. 14.

2. That the remark in Heb. vi. 10. (*God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister*) is not suitable to the state of the church at Jerusalem, at that time, because, though the members of that church at first were in a state of affluence, when they had all things in common, yet afterwards they became so poor that they were relieved by the contributions of the Gentile Christians in Macedonia, Galatia, Corinth, and Antioch. There is, however, no force in this objection. Ministering to the saints in those days did not consist solely in help-

* Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 199. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 383—387; 4to, vol. i. pp. 326, 327.

ing them with money. Attending on them in their imprisonment—rendering them any little offices of which they stood in need—speaking to them in a kind and consolatory manner—these and such other services as may be performed without money were, and still are, as much ministering to the saints, as affording them pecuniary aid. And doubtless the members of the church at Jerusalem ministered in that manner to one another in their afflictions. But, though the generality of the members of that church were reduced to poverty by the sufferings they had sustained, yet in all probability there were some among them in better circumstances, who might have deserved the commendation, that they *had ministered and did minister to the saints*, by giving them a share of their worldly goods *.

II. The next question concerning this Epistle relates to the language in which it was written. On this subject there have been two principal opinions; one, that it was originally written in Hebrew, and translated into Greek by Luke or Barnabas; and the other, that it was written in Greek. The former opinion is entertained by the fathers, Clement of Alexandria, Euthalius, Theodoret, Theophylact, Jerome, and (as some have supposed) Origen, and also by Bahrtdt, Michaelis, and others among the moderns. The latter opinion—that it was originally composed in Greek—is held by Fabricius, Beausobre, Cappel, Owen, Basnage, Mill, Leusden, Pictet, Wetstein, Braunius, Heidegger, Van Til, Calmet, Carpzov, Pritius, Moldenhawer, Lardner, Doddridge, Macknight, Rosenmüller, Rumpæus, Viser, Bishop Tomline, Dr. Hales, and we believe almost every modern commentator and critic who has treated on this book.

The arguments for the Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic original of this Epistle may be reduced to the two following.

1. As this Epistle was written for the use of Hebrew Christians, it was proper that it should be written in their own language. To this argument it has been replied, *first*, That if it was proper that the apostle should write to them in the Hebrew tongue, it must have been equally proper for him to write his letter to the Romans in their own language; yet we know that Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans was not written in Latin, the language of Rome, but in Greek: nay, that all his Epistles, and those of the other apostles, were written in Greek, and not in the languages of the churches and persons to whom

* Macknight's Preface to the Epistle to the Hebrews, sect. 2. § 1.

they were addressed. *Secondly*, The apostolical Epistles being intended for the use of the whole Christian world in every age, as well as for the persons to whom they were sent, it was more proper that they should be written in Greek than in any provincial dialect; because the Greek language was then universally understood. The arguments already adduced, to show that Greek was the original language of the New Testament generally, are equally applicable to prove that the Epistle to the Hebrews was never written in Hebrew*.

2. It is objected that this Epistle must have been originally written in Hebrew, because its Greek style is superior to that of Saint Paul's other Epistles. To which Rosenmüller, after Carpzov, has replied by observing, that the difference in style may be readily accounted for, by considering that this was one of the apostle's last Epistles, and that from his extensive intercourse with men of various ranks and conditions, during his numerous journeys, 'Paul the aged' would naturally write in a different style from Paul when a young man. To this remark we may add, that there are such coincidences of expression between this Epistle and Saint Paul's other letters, which were written in Greek, as plainly show that he was its author, and consequently did not write it in Hebrew; but as this topic is discussed more at length in a subsequent page †, we proceed to remark, that, as the Syriac version of this Epistle was made from the *Greek* at the end of the first or at the beginning of the second century, it is evident that no Hebrew original was then extant; and consequently that Michaelis's hypothesis, respecting the blunders committed by the supposed translator, has no foundation whatever. Again, the Epistle is said to have been translated by Clement of Rome, but where or when, we are not informed. Was this translation executed in Italy before it was sent to the Hebrews? If so, what purpose could be answered by writing it in Hebrew when it was only to be used in Greek? Was it sent in Hebrew before the supposed translation? In what language was it communicated to others by the Christians who first received it? Clement was never in the East to translate it. And if all the first copies of it were dispersed in Hebrew, how came they to be so utterly lost, that no authentic report or tradition concerning them, or any one of them, ever remained: besides, if it were translated by Clement in the West, and that

* See Vol. I. pp. 238, 239. To the above argument we may add that the apostolic father Barnabas wrote his Epistle to the Hebrews in the Greek language.

† See pp. 581--586 *infra*, where the question respecting the author of this Epistle is considered.

translation alone were preserved, how came it to pass, that it was so well known and generally received in the East before the Western churches received it into their canon of Scripture? This tradition therefore, respecting its translation by Clement, is every way groundless and improbable.

Independently of the preceding considerations, which show that the Epistle to the Hebrews was never extant in the Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic dialect, the Epistle itself furnishes us with decisive and positive evidence that it was originally written in the language in which it is now extant.

1. In the first place, the style of this Epistle, throughout, manifests that it is no translation. It has altogether the air of an original. There is nothing of the constraint of a translator, nor do we meet with those Hebraisms which occur so constantly in the Septuagint version.

2. The numerous paronomasias, or concurrences of words of like sound, but which cannot be rendered in English with due effect, that are to be found in this Epistle, are a clear proof that it is not a translation. See instances of such paronomasias in Hebrews v. 8, 14. vii. 3. 19. ix. 10. x. 34. xi. 37. and xiii. 14. (Gr.)

3. Hebrew names are interpreted; as *Melchizedek* by *King of Righteousness* (vii. 2), and *Salem* by *Peace*, which interpretation would have been superfluous if the Epistle had been written in Hebrew. If this Epistle be a translation, and not an original, because the interpretation of a few words is added, we may with equal propriety affirm that Saint Paul wrote his Epistles to the Galatians and Romans in Hebrew, because he has added the interpretation of the Syriac word *Abba*,—father (Rom. viii. 14. Gal. iv. 6), or that Saint John wrote his Gospel in Hebrew because (i. 47. xx. 16.) he has explained the meaning of the Hebrew words *Messiah* and *Rabboni*. The same remark may be extended to the other three evangelists, all of whom, we have seen, wrote in Greek, as the whole current of Christian antiquity also demonstrates. A further proof that the Epistle to the Hebrews was originally written in Greek, and consequently was not a translation, is, that the argument of the author is founded on the interpretation which he has given us of the words above cited.

4. The passages, cited from the Old Testament in this Epistle, are not quoted from the Hebrew but from the Septuagint, where that faithfully represented the Hebrew text. Frequently the stress of the argument taken from such quotations relies on something peculiar in that version, which could not

possibly have taken place if the Epistle had been written in Hebrew. And in a few instances where the Septuagint did not fully render the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the author of the Epistle has substituted translations of his own, from which he argues in the same manner, whence it is manifest that this Epistle never was extant in Hebrew*.

Independently of these (we think indisputable and positive) arguments for the Greek original of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which Michaelis has attempted to answer, but without success, the hypothesis that it was written in Hebrew is attended with several difficulties, and particularly the two following.

1. That at that time the author (Saint Paul, as is shown in a subsequent page†), could not determine in what dialect he should write to the Hebrews, which they might all understand: for the pure Hebrew then existed in the Old Testament, though it was not in popular use. Among the Jews there were several dialects spoken, as the East Aramæan or Chaldee, and the West Aramæan or Syriac; which suffered various alterations from the places where the Jews were dispersed; so that the original Hebrew was known comparatively to few, and those who were conversant in Syriac might not be acquainted with the Chaldee. If therefore this Epistle had been written in biblical Hebrew, the *learned few* only could have read it; and had it been written in either of the other dialects, a part only of the Jews could have perused it.

2. By writing in Hebrew, the author of this Epistle could have instructed only his own nation; and his arguments would have availed only with the pious few, while the unbelieving multitude would in all probability have ridiculed his doctrines, and misrepresented them to the uninformed and to strangers. But by writing the Epistle in Greek, which language, we have seen, was at that time universally known and understood, he instructed his own countrymen, and also explained the Christian covenant to the Gentiles§.

* Dr. Owen has ably treated this topic in his fifth exercitation on the Hebrews, vol. i. pp. 46—53. folio edition. Calvin and several other divines have laid much stress upon the rendering of the Hebrew word *berith* by *διαθήκη*, which denotes either testament or covenant: and Michaelis has acknowledged that this is the most specious of all the arguments, adduced to prove that the Epistle to the Hebrews was originally written in Greek. But Braunius has shown that it proves nothing either way. Proleg. in Ep. ad Hebr. p. 25.

† See pp. 581—585.

§ Francisci Junii Parallela Sacra, lib. 3. c. 9. in Ep. ad Hebr. tom. i. p. 1595. edit. Genevæ, 1613.

III. The next object of inquiry respects the author of this Epistle, some ascribing it to Barnabas, the companion of Paul; others to Clement of Rome; others to the evangelist Luke; and the Christian church generally to Saint Paul.

Tertullian * was the first who ascribed this Epistle to Barnabas, and his opinion was adopted by Cameron, but it rests on mere conjecture, for Tertullian cites no authority, and does not even say that this opinion was received by the church. He is also contradicted by Clement of Alexandria †, who mentions the Epistle to the Hebrews as Saint Paul's; to which we may add, that the style of the Epistle ascribed to Barnabas differs so widely from that of the letter to the Hebrews, as to prove that it could not have been written by him. Further it appears from Heb. xiii. 24. that this Epistle was written from Italy, where there is no evidence that Barnabas ever went. Philastrius § relates, that, at the end of the fourth century, many persons attributed this Epistle to Clement of Rome; but this notion is contradicted by the fact that Clement has himself repeatedly quoted this Epistle.

The same author also informs us that some ascribed it to Saint Luke; and this hypothesis has been adopted by Grotius, on account of the resemblance of style between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the writings of Saint Luke, and especially on account of the greater elegance of style and choice of words discoverable in this Epistle, than is to be found in Saint Paul's other letters. But to this hypothesis there are several objections. For, 1. Saint Luke was a Gentile by birth, and could not have acquired that intimate knowledge of the Hebrew literature and religion which Saint Paul possessed, who was instructed by Gamaliel and other celebrated Jewish teachers. 2. If Saint Luke wrote this Epistle, why did he not rather inscribe it to the Greeks who were his countrymen? 3. Ecclesiastical antiquity is totally silent concerning this Epistle as being written by that evangelist, to whom all the primitive Christian writers unanimously ascribe the Gospel which bears his name, and also the Acts of the Apostles. 4. The author of this Epistle addresses the Hebrews (xiii. 18, 19) as persons among whom he had preached the Gospel: and as it nowhere appears that Luke had preached to the converted Jews, it follows that he could not be the author of this Epistle.

* De Pudicitia, cap. 20.

† Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 34. See the passage also in Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 211; 4to, vol. i. p. 394.

§ Hær. c. 89. Lardner, 8vo, vol. iv. p. 500; 4to, vol. i. p. 522.

Among the modern writers, the illustrious reformer Luther thought that this Epistle was written by Apollos, who is mentioned in Acts xviii. 24. 28. as being an eloquent man, mighty in the Scripture, fervent in spirit, and one that mightily convinced the Jews out of the Scripture itself; all which characters unquestionably are found in the Epistle to the Hebrews. But this conjecture is totally unsupported by historical testimony, no mention whatever being made of any Epistle or other writing as being composed by Apollos. Some weight would certainly have attached to this ingenious and plausible conjecture, if the excellent qualities ascribed to Apollos had been peculiar to him, or if they had not all been found in Saint Paul in a more eminent degree than in Apollos. But Saint Paul being endowed with more ample gifts and excellencies than Apollos, and being also a divinely constituted apostle, the conjecture of Luther necessarily falls to the ground*.

We are now to consider the evidence for the opinion which has generally prevailed in the Christian church, viz. that the Epistle to the Hebrews is the genuine production of the great apostle to the Gentiles.

In the first place, it is acknowledged to be Saint Paul's production by the apostle Peter in his second Epistle (iii. 15, 16); from which passage it is evident,

1. That Peter had read all Paul's letters.
2. That Paul had written to those Christians to whom Peter was then writing, that is, to the believing Jews in general (2 Pet. i. 1), and to those of the dispersion mentioned in 1 Pet. i. 1. Now, since there is no evidence to prove that this Epistle was lost, it follows that it must be that which is now inscribed to the Hebrews.

3. That Paul wrote to them concerning the same topics which were the subjects of Peter's Epistle. Thus Peter writes, that *by Christ are given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness* (2 Pet. i. 3, 4), and that Jesus Christ is the *Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased with us, of whom the prophets spoke*. These very topics are copiously discussed in Heb. i. to x. 19. Again, Peter exhorts them to *faith and holiness* (2 Pet. i. 5—16. ii. 15); so also does Paul (Heb. ii. 1—5. iii. 1, 6—19), Peter shows the danger of apostasy (2 Pet. ii. 20, 21), and so does the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. vi. 4—9).

4. In the Epistle mentioned by Peter, he seems to ascribe to Saint Paul an eminency of wisdom. It was, he

* It is adopted, however, by Dindorf, in his *Excursus ad J. A. Ernesti, Lectiones Academicæ in Epistolam ad Hebræos*, p. 1180. 8vo, Lipsiæ, 1815.

says, *written according to the wisdom given to him*. As Paul made use of that wisdom which had been conferred on him in writing all his other Epistles, so there is no doubt that he exerted the same wisdom, zeal, and love in writing the Epistle to the Hebrews: but, in the passage now under consideration, Peter eminently distinguishes that apostle's wisdom. He does not refer to Paul's spiritual wisdom in general, in the knowledge of the will of God and of the mysteries of the Gospel; but he particularly alludes to the especial holy prudence which Paul has displayed in the composition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, whom the structure of his arguments was singularly adapted to convince, if unbelievers; while his warnings and encouragements were admirably calculated to animate the believing Hebrews to constancy and fortitude in the faith of the Gospel. At the same time, nothing more clearly shows the singular wisdom, which Peter asserts to be manifest in this letter, than Paul's condescension to the capacities, prejudices, and affections of those to whom he wrote, and whom he constantly urged with their own principles and concessions.

5. That Peter affirms there were *some things* discussed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which were *hard or difficult to be understood* (τινα δυσνοητα). Now Paul explicitly states (Heb. v. 11.) that some of the topics which he was to discuss in that Epistle were δυσερμηνευτα, *hard to be uttered*, or difficult to be interpreted, and consequently hard to be understood; particularly the topic he immediately had in view, viz. the *typical* nature of the person of Melchisedek. Or if it refer to the priesthood of Christ, that would be still more 'hard to be uttered', because it implies not only his being constituted a priest after this *typical* order, but also his paying down the ransom for the sins of the whole world, and his satisfaction of divine justice by this sacrifice, and thus opening the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Topics like these it would be difficult for the apostle to explain in a proper manner to the Hebrews; not because they were in themselves abstruse, but because the Hebrews were dull of apprehension, through their prejudiced attachment to the Levitical law and priesthood*.

* To the preceding argument it has been objected, that the Epistle particularly intended by Saint Peter may be that written to the Romans, in which Saint Paul speaks to the Jews by name (ii. 17), and in which there is an exhortation to account the long-suffering of God to be salvation, or that which leads to repentance. But to this objection Whitby has well replied, (1.) That what is written in the Epistle to the Romans is addressed to the unbelieving Jews only, whereas Saint Peter writes to the brethren (2 Pet. iii. 12), the *beloved* (verses 1. 14. 17), to those who *had received like precious faith* (i. 1). He therefore could not mean the Jews, of whom Saint Paul speaks in the

The preceding considerations will show that the Epistle to the Hebrews was the identical letter which Peter had in view. We have insisted the more strenuously upon his testimony, because, as he was an inspired apostle, we think his evidence sufficient to determine the controversy respecting this Epistle, and to demonstrate (notwithstanding the sceptical declaration of Michaelis to the contrary) that it is a genuine and inspired production of the illustrious apostle Saint Paul. There are, however, many other testimonies to prove the same point, which we shall now proceed to state; each of them singly outbalancing the weight of the conjectures advanced against it, but all of which, taken collectively, furnish such a body of evidence in favour of Saint Paul being the author of this Epistle, as can be adduced for no other antient anonymous writing whatever. We therefore proceed to remark,

Secondly, that the testimony of ecclesiastical antiquity decidedly ascribes this Epistle to Saint Paul. Among the fathers of the Greek or Eastern church, who wrote in the Greek language, we find allusions to it in the Epistles of Ignatius, about the year 107. The Epistle to the Hebrews seems to be referred to by Polycarp bishop of Smyrna, in his Epistle to the Philippians in the year 108, and in the relation of his martyrdom, written about the middle of the second century. This Epistle is often quoted as Saint Paul's by Clement of Alexandria, about the year 194. It is received and quoted as Paul's by Origen about 230. It was also received as the apostle's by Dionysius bishop of Alexandria in 247. It is plainly referred to by Theognostus of Alexandria about 282. It appears to have been received by Methodius about 292, by Pamphilus about 294, and by Archelaus bishop in Mesopotamia at the beginning of the fourth century, by the Manicheans in the fourth, and by the Paulicians in the seventh century. It was received and ascribed to Paul by Alexander bishop of Alexandria in the year 313, and by the Arians in the fourth century. Eusebius bishop of Cæsarea about 315, says, "There

Epistle to the Romans. Nor (2.) can that Epistle with propriety be said to be written to the dispersed Jews, because it is addressed to those at Rome only (Rom. i. 17), and chiefly to the Gentiles there (i. 13. xi. 13. xv. 15, 16).—(3.) The words of Saint Paul in Rom. ii. are not an exhortation to count the long-suffering of God salvation, but a *reproof* for despising this long-suffering: whereas in the Epistle to the Hebrews (x.) he commends their patience under sufferings, and assures them that it would obtain salvation; and that, if they lived by faith, their Lord would come, and would not tarry. To which we may add, that in the Epistle to the Hebrews (iv. 9. xii. 14. 18. 24) mention is made of the introduction of the righteous into the heavenly country, which is one of the topics mentioned in the second Epistle of Saint Peter.

are fourteen Epistles of Paul manifest and well known: but yet there are some, who reject that to the Hebrews, alleging in behalf of their opinion, that it was not received by the church of Rome as a writing of Paul." It is often quoted by Eusebius himself as Saint Paul's and as sacred Scripture. This Epistle was received by Athanasius without any hesitation. In his enumeration of Saint Paul's fourteen Epistles, this is placed next after the two to the Thessalonians, and before the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. The same order is observed in the Synopsis of Scripture ascribed to him. This Epistle is received as Paul's by Adamantius, author of a dialogue against the Marcionites, in 330, and by Cyril of Jerusalem in 348; by the council of Laodicea in 363, where Saint Paul's Epistles are enumerated in the same order as in Athanasius, just noticed. This Epistle is also received as Paul's by Epiphanius about 368; by the apostolical constitutions about the end of the fourth century; by Basil about 370; by Gregory Nazianzen in 370; by Amphilochius also. But he says it was not universally received as Paul's. It was received by Gregory Nyssen about 371; by Didymus of Alexandria about the same time; by Ephraim the Syrian in 370, and by the churches of Syria; by Diodore of Tarsus in 378; by Hierax, a learned Egyptian, about the year 302; by Serapion bishop of Thmuis in Egypt about 347; by Titus bishop of Bostra in Arabia about 362; by Theodore bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia about the year 394; by Chrysostom in the year 398; by Severian bishop of Gabala in Syria in 401; by Victor of Antioch about 401; by Palladius, author of a life of Chrysostom, about 408; by Isidore of Pelusium about 412; by Cyril bishop of Alexandria in 412; by Theodoret in 423; by Eutherius bishop of Tyana in Cappadocia in 431; by Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, about 440; by Euthalius in Egypt about 458; and, probably by Dionysius, falsely called the Areopagite; by the author of the *Questiones et Responsiones*, commonly ascribed to Justin Martyr, but rather written in the fifth century. It is in the Alexandrian manuscript written in the sixth century, and in the Stichometry of Nicephorus about 806; is received as Paul's by Cosmas of Alexandria about 535; by Leontius of Constantinople about 610; by John Damascen in 730; by Photius about 858; by Œcumenius about the year 950; and by Theophylact in 1070.

Among the fathers of the Latin or Western church, who wrote in the Latin language, we may first cite Clement, who was bishop of Rome, though he wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians in Greek A. D. 96, or, according to some critics,

about the year 70. In this Epistle there are several allusions or references to the Epistle to the Hebrews. Irenæus bishop of Lyons about 178, we are assured by Eusebius, cited some passages out of this Epistle in a work now lost; nevertheless it does not appear that he received it as Saint Paul's. By Tertullian, presbyter of Carthage, about the year 200, this Epistle is ascribed to Barnabas. Caius, about 212, supposed to have been presbyter in the church of Rome, reckoning up the Epistles of Saint Paul, mentioned thirteen only, omitting that to the Hebrews. Hippolytus, who flourished about 220, did not receive the Epistle to the Hebrews as Saint Paul's. This Epistle is not quoted by Cyprian bishop of Carthage about 248 and afterwards, nor does it appear to have been received by Novatus, or Novatian, presbyter of Rome, about 251; nevertheless it was in after times received by his followers. It may be thought by some that this Epistle is referred to by Arnobius about 306, and Lactantius about the same time. It is plainly quoted by another Arnobius in the fifth century. It was received as Paul's by Hilary of Poitiers about 354; and by Lucifer bishop of Cagliari in Sardinia about the same time, and by his followers; it was also received as Paul's by C. M. Victorinus. Whether it was received by Optatus of Milevi in Africa, about 370, is doubtful. It was received as Paul's by Ambrose bishop of Milan about 374; by the Priscillianists about 378. About the year 380 was published a commentary upon thirteen Epistles of Paul only, ascribed to Hilary deacon of Rome. It was received as Paul's by Philaster bishop of Brescia in Italy about 380; but he takes notice that it was not then received by all. His successor Gaudentius, about 387, quotes this Epistle as Paul's; it is also readily received as Paul's by Jerome about 392; and he says it was generally received by the Greeks, and the Christians in the East, but not by all the Latins. It was received as Paul's by Ruffinus in 397; it is also in the catalogue of the third council of Carthage in 397. It is frequently quoted by Augustine as Saint Paul's. In one place he says, "It is of doubtful authority with some, but he was inclined to follow the opinion of the churches in the East, who received it among the canonical Scriptures." It was received as Paul's by Chromatius bishop of Aquileia in Italy about 401; by Innocent bishop of Rome about 402; by Paulinus bishop of Nola in Italy about 403. Pelagius about 405 wrote a commentary upon thirteen Epistles of Saint Paul, omitting that to the Hebrews; nevertheless it was received by his followers. It was received by Cassian about 424; by Prosper of Aquitaine about

434, and by the authors of the works ascribed to him; by Eucherius bishop of Lyons in 434; by Sedulius about 818; by Leo bishop of Rome in 440; by Salvian presbyter of Marseilles about 440; by Gelasius bishop of Rome about 496; by Facundus, an African bishop, about 540; by Junilius, an African bishop, about 556; by Cassiodorus in 556; by the author of the imperfect work upon Saint Matthew, about 560; by Gregory bishop of Rome about 590; by Isidore of Seville about 596; and by Bede about 701; or the beginning of the eighth century*.

From the preceding testimonies it is evident, that this Epistle was generally received in antient times by those Christians who used the Greek language, and lived in the eastern parts of the Roman empire. In particular Clement of Alexandria, before the end of the second century, received this Epistle as Saint Paul's without any doubt or hesitation. Although it is not expressly quoted as Saint Paul's by any of the Latin writers of the first three centuries, yet it was known to Irenæus and Tertullian; and it is manifest that it was received as an Epistle of Saint Paul by many Latin writers in the fourth and fifth centuries. Origen, who held some peculiar notions concerning it, says "*That the antients did not rashly hand it down as Saint Paul's*".† It is very certain that the churches and writers, who were antients with respect to Origen, must have conversed with the apostles themselves, or at least with their successors. And since this tradition was *antient* in the times of Clement of Alexandria and Origen, about one hundred and thirty years after the Epistle was written, it must have had its rise in the days of Saint Paul himself, and so cannot reasonably be contested.

Thirdly, Saint Paul cherished an ardent zeal and affection towards his kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom. ix. 1—4. &c.) And can we think it likely that he should never write to those who were so exceedingly dear to him? Knowing their prejudices concerning the Levitical law, what subject could he select more appropriate for their instruction and edification, than the abrogation of the Levitical priesthood, and the surpassing excellence of Christ's person and office, especially of his true, spiritual, and eternal priesthood, of which the Levitical priesthood was but a shadow, and of which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has treated so largely?

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 391—395; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 329—331. In his notes there are references to the various parts of the preceding volumes, in which the extracts from the above-named fathers are to be found.

† Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 25.

Fourthly, if an author's method of treating his subjects, together with his manner of reasoning, is a sure mark by which he may be ascertained (as all good judges of composition allow), we shall without hesitation pronounce Saint Paul to be the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. For, in this letter, we find that overflowing of sentiment briefly expressed which distinguishes Saint Paul from every other sacred writer. "Therein also are abrupt transitions from the subject in hand to something subordinate, but at the same time connected with it; which having pursued for a little while, the writer returns to his subject*, and illustrates it by arguments of great force, couched, sometimes in a short expression, and sometimes in a single word—all which are peculiar to Paul. In this Epistle, likewise, contrary to the practice of other writers, but in Paul's manner, we meet with many elliptical expressions, which are to be supplied either from the foregoing or from the following clauses. In it also, as in Paul's acknowledged Epistles, we find reasonings addressed to the thoughts of the reader, and answers to objections not proposed; because, being obvious, the writer knew they would naturally occur, and therefore needed to be removed. Lastly, after Paul's manner, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has subjoined to his reasonings many exhortations to piety and virtue; all which, to persons who are judges of writing, plainly point out the apostle Paul as the author of this Epistle" †.

In the fifth place, there are several exhortations in this Epistle, as well as resemblances or agreements between its style or phrases, and those of Saint Paul's acknowledged Epistles, which clearly show that the Epistle to the Hebrews is his undoubted production. Braunius, Carpzov, Lardner, and Macknight have adduced numerous instances at considerable length, from which we have abridged the following particulars:

1. *Coincidences between the exhortations in this Epistle and those in Saint Paul's other letters.* See Heb. xii. 3. compared with Gal. vi. 9. 2 Thess. iii. 13. and Eph. iii. 13.; Heb. xii. 14. with Rom. xii. 18.; Heb. xiii. 1, 3, 4. with Eph. v. 2—4.; Heb. xiii. 16. with Phil. iv. 18. See also Acts ii. 42. Rom. xv. 26. 2 Cor. viii. 24. and ix. 13.

* Of these parentheses see an example in Heb. i. 2—4, in which the truth of the Gospel is argued from the dignity of Christ's person; in verse 5, the discourse is continued from the first verse. See other instances in Heb. iii. 7—11. 14. and iv. 2, &c.

† Macknight's Preface to the Epistle to the Hebrews. sect. 1. sect. III.

2. *Instances of agreement in the style or phrases of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in the acknowledged Epistles of Saint Paul.* See Heb. ii. 4. compared with Rom. xv. 19. 2 Cor. xii. 12. and 2 Thess. ii. 9.; Heb. ii. 14. with 2 Tim. i. 10. and 1 Cor. xv. 26.; Heb. iii. 1. with Phil. iii. 14. and 2 Tim. i. 9.; Heb. v. 12. with 1 Cor. iii. 2.; Heb. viii. 1. with Eph. i. 21.; Heb. viii. 5. and x. 1. with Col. ii. 17.; Heb. x. 33. with 1 Cor. iv. 9.; Heb. xiii. 9. with Eph. iv. 14.; Heb. xiii. 10, 11. with 1 Cor. ix. 13.; Heb. xiii. 20, 21. with Rom. xv. 33. xvi. 20. Phil. iv. 9. 1 Thess. v. 23. and 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

3. *In his acknowledged Epistles, Saint Paul has numerous allusions to the exercises and games which were then in great repute, and were frequently solemnized in Greece and in other parts of the Roman empire.* In the Epistle to the Hebrews we have several of these allusions, which are also expressed with great elegance. Compare Heb. vi. 18. xii. 1—3, 4. 12. with 1 Cor. ix. 24. Phil. iii. 12—14. 2 Tim. ii. 5. iv. 6—8. and Acts xx. 24.

4. “In the Epistle to the Hebrews there are interpretations of some passages of the Jewish Scriptures, which may properly be called Paul’s, because they are to be found only in his writings. For example, Psal. ii. 7. ‘Thou art my Son: to-day I have begotten thee’; is applied to Jesus (Heb. i. 5), just as Paul, in his discourse to the Jews in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, applied the same passage of Scripture to him (Acts xiii. 33). In like manner, the explication of Psal. viii. 4. and of Psal. cx. 1. given by Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 25. 27. is found in Heb. ii. 7, 8. So also the explication of the covenant with Abraham given (Heb. vi. 14. 18), is no where found but in Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians (iii. 8, 9. 14. 18).

5. “There are, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, doctrines which none of the inspired writers have mentioned, except Paul. In particular, the doctrines of the mediation and intercession of Christ, explained in Heb. iv. 15, 16. and vii. 22. 25. are no where found in the books of the New Testament, except in Paul’s Epistles (Rom. viii. 34. Gal. iii. 19, 20). The title of Mediator, which is given to Jesus (Heb. vii. 22. viii. 6. ix. 15. xii. 24), is nowhere applied to Jesus except in Paul’s Epistles (1 Tim. ii. 5). In like manner none of the inspired writers, except Paul (Heb. viii. 1—4), have informed us that Christ offered the sacrifice of himself in heaven; and that he did not exercise his priestly office on earth, but only in heaven.

6. “In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we find such enlarged views of the divine dispensations respecting religion; such an extensive knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures, according to their

antient and true interpretation, which Paul, no doubt, learned from the celebrated doctors under whose tuition he studied in his younger years at Jerusalem; such a deep insight also into the most recondite meanings of these Scriptures, and such admirable reasonings founded thereon for the confirmation of the Gospel revelation, as, without disparagement to the other apostles, seem to have exceeded, not their natural abilities and education only, but even that degree of inspiration with which they were endowed. None of them but Paul, who was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and who profited in the Jewish religion and learning above many of his fellow-students, and who, in his riper years, was intimately acquainted with the learned men of his own nation (Acts ix. 1, 2. 14. xxvi. 4, 5), and who was called to the apostleship by Christ himself, when for that purpose he appeared to him from heaven—nay, who was caught up by Christ into the third heaven—was equal to the subjects treated of in this most admirable Epistle”.*

7. *The conclusion of this Epistle has a remarkable agreement with the conclusions of Saint Paul's Epistles, in several respects.* Compare Heb. xii. 18. with Rom. xv. 30. Eph. vi. 18, 19. Col. iv. 3. 1 Thess. v. 25. and 2 Thess. iii. 1.; Heb. xiii. 20, 21. with Rom. xv. 30—33. Eph. vi. 19—23. 1 Thess. v. 23. and 2 Thess. iii. 16.; Heb. xiii. 24. with Rom. xvi. 1 Cor. xvi. 19—21. 2 Cor. xiii. 13. Phil. iv. 21, 22.; Heb. xiii. 25. with 2 Thess. iii. 18. Col. iv. 18. Eph. vi. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 21. 2 Tim. iv. 22. and Tit. iii. 15.

Notwithstanding this strong chain of proof for the authenticity of Saint Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, doubts have still been entertained whether it is a genuine production of that apostle. These doubts rest principally on the omission of the writer's name, and the superior elegance of the style in which it is written.

1. It is indeed certain that all the acknowledged Epistles of Saint Paul begin with a salutation in his own name, and that most of them were directed from some particular place, and sent by some special messengers: whereas the Epistle to the Hebrews is anonymous, and is not directed from any place, nor is the name of the messenger introduced by whom it was sent to Judea. These omissions, however, can scarcely be considered as conclusive against the positive testimony already adduced. And they are satisfactorily accounted for by Clement of Alexandria, and by Jerome, who intimate, that as

* Macknight's Preface to the Epistle to the Hebrews, sect. I. § III.

Jesus Christ himself was the peculiar *apostle to the Hebrews* (as acknowledged in this Epistle, iii. 1), Saint Paul declined, through humility, to assume the title of an apostle. To which Theodoret adds, that Paul being peculiarly the apostle of the *uncircumcision*, as the rest were of the *circumcision* (Gal. ii. 9. Rom. xi. 13), he scrupled to assume any public character when writing to the people of their charge. He did not mention his name, messenger, or the particular persons to whom it was sent, because (as Dr. Lardner judiciously remarks) such a long letter might give umbrage to the ruling powers at this crisis, when the Jews were most turbulent, and might endanger himself, the messenger, and those to whom it was directed. But they might easily know the author by the style, and also from the messenger, without any formal notice or superscription. But the absence of the apostle's name is no proof that the Epistle to the Hebrews was not written by Saint Paul: for, in our canon of the New Testament, there are Epistles universally acknowledged to be the productions of an inspired apostle, notwithstanding his name is nowhere inserted in them. The three Epistles of Saint John are here intended, in all of which that apostle has omitted his name, for some reasons not now known. The first Epistle begins in the same manner as the Epistle to the Hebrews; and, in the other two, he calls himself simply the elder or presbyter. That the apostle however did not mean to conceal himself, we learn from the Epistle itself: "Know ye," says he, "that our *brother Timothy hath been sent abroad*, with whom, if he come shortly, *I will see you.*"* (Heb. xiii. 33.) The objection, therefore, from the omission of the apostle's name, necessarily falls to the ground.

2. With regard to the objection, that this Epistle is superior in point of style to Saint Paul's other writings, and therefore is not the production of that apostle, we have already remarked that this may be accounted for by the circumstance that it was one of Saint Paul's latest written Epistles, composed in his mature age, and after long intercourse with the learned Gentiles. But "there does not appear to be such a superiority in the style of this Epistle, as should lead to the conclusion that it was not written by Saint Paul. Those who have thought differently have mentioned Barnabas, Luke, and Clement, as authors or translators of this Epistle. The opinion of Jerome

* Michaelis thinks it highly improbable that Paul would visit Jerusalem again, and expose his life to the zealots there. But surely, Dr. Hales remarks, he might revisit Judea without incurring that danger. *Analysis of Chronology*, vol. ii. book ii. p. 1130.

was, that ‘the sentiments are the apostle’s, but the language and composition of some one else, who committed to writing the apostle’s sense, and, as it were, reduced into commentaries the things spoken by his master.’ Dr. Lardner says, ‘My conjecture is, that Paul dictated the Epistle in Hebrew, and another, who was a great master of the Greek language, immediately wrote down the apostle’s sentiments in his own elegant Greek; but who this assistant of the apostle was, is altogether unknown.’ But surely the writings of Saint Paul, like those of other authors, may not all have the same precise degree of merit; and if, upon a careful perusal and comparison, it should be thought that the Epistle to the Hebrews is written with greater elegance than the acknowledged compositions of this apostle, it should also be remembered that the apparent design and contents of this Epistle suggest the idea of more studied composition, and yet that there is nothing in it which amounts to a marked difference of style*.” On the other hand, as we have already seen†, there are the same construction of sentences, the same style of expression, and the same sentences expressed, in this Epistle, which occur in no part of the Scriptures except in Saint Paul’s Epistles.

Upon the whole, we conclude with Braunius, Carpzov, Pri-tius, Whitby, Lardner, Macknight, Hales, Rosenmüller, Bengel, Bishop Tomline, and almost every other modern commentator and biblical critic, that the weight of evidence, both external and internal, preponderates so greatly in favour of Saint Paul, that we cannot but consider the Epistle to the Hebrews as written by that apostle; and that, instead of containing “far-fetched analogies and inaccurate reasonings” (as the opponents of our Saviour’s divinity and atonement affirm), its composition is more highly wrought, and its language more finished, than any of Saint Paul’s other Epistles, and that it affords a finished model of *didactic* writing.

IV. With regard to the time when this Epistle was written, critics and commentators are not agreed, some referring it to A. D. 58, but the greater part placing it between A. D. 61 and 64. If (as we believe) Saint Paul was its author, the time when it was written may easily be determined; for the salutation from the saints in Italy (Heb. xiii. 24), together with the apostle’s promise to see the Hebrews shortly (23), plainly intimates that his imprisonment was then either terminated, or on

* Bishop Tomline’s Elements of Christian Theology, vol. i. p. 455, 456.

† See pp. 588—590. *supra*.

the point of being so. It was therefore written from Italy, perhaps from Rome, soon after the Epistles to the Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon, and not long before Saint Paul left Italy, viz. at the end of A. D. 62, or early in 63. It is evident from several passages, as Lardner and Macknight have observed, that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem; for, in Heb. viii. 4. ix. 25. x. 11. and xiii. 10. the temple is mentioned as *then* standing, and the Levitical sacrifices are noticed as being *then* offered. To which we may add, that in x. 32—37. the apostle comforts the believing Hebrews under the persecution, which their unbelieving brethren were carrying on against them, by the prospect of Christ's speedy advent to destroy Jerusalem and the whole Mosaic economy.

V. The occasion of writing this Epistle will be sufficiently apparent from an attentive review of its contents. The Jews did every thing in their power to withdraw their brethren who had been converted, from the Christian faith. To persecutions and threats, they added arguments derived from the excellency of the Jewish religion. They observed, we may infer, that the law of Moses was given by the ministration of angels; that Moses was far superior to Jesus of Nazareth, who suffered an ignominious death; that the public worship of God, instituted by their great legislator and prophet, was truly splendid, and worthy of Jehovah: while the Christians, on the contrary, had no established priesthood, no temple, no altars, no victims, &c. In opposition to such arguments, the apostle shows, what the learned doctors, Scribes, and elders at Jerusalem strongly denied; viz. That Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had lately put to death, was the Messiah, the Son of God, and far superior to the angels, to Moses, to the high-priest of the Old Testament, and to all other priests; that from his sufferings and death, which he endured for us, much greater and more lasting benefits have resulted to the whole human race, than the Jews ever derived from their temple service, and from the numerous rites and ordinances of the Levitical laws, which were absolutely inefficacious to procure the pardon of sin. The reality of the sacrifice of himself, which Christ offered for sin, is clearly demonstrated. From these and other arguments, the apostle proves that the religion of Jesus is much more excellent and perfect than that of Moses, and exhorts the Christian converts to constancy in the faith, and to the unwearied pursuit of all godliness and virtue.

The great object of the apostle, therefore, in this Epistle, is to show the deity of Jesus Christ, and the excellency of his

Gospel, when compared with the institutions of Moses; to prevent the Hebrews or Jewish converts from relapsing into those rites and ceremonies which were now abolished; and to point out their total insufficiency, as means of reconciliation and atonement. The reasonings are interspersed with numerous, solemn, and affectionate warnings and exhortations, addressed to different descriptions of persons. At length Saint Paul shows the nature, efficacy, and triumph of faith, by which all the saints in former ages had been accepted by God, and enabled to obey, suffer, and perform exploits, in defence of their holy religion; from which he takes occasion to exhort them to steadfastness and perseverance in the true faith.

The Epistle to the Hebrews consists of three parts, viz.

PART 1. demonstrates the deity of Christ by the explicit declarations of Scripture (ch. i—x. 18).

The proposition is, that *Christ is the true God* (i. 1—3). The proofs of this are,

i. His superiority to angels, by whom he is worshipped as their Creator and Lord (i. 4—14).

Inference. — Therefore we ought to give heed to him (ii. 1—4).

The superiority of Christ over angels asserted, notwithstanding his temporary humiliation in our nature (ii. 5—9); without which he could not have accomplished the work of man's redemption (10—15); and for this purpose he took not upon him the nature of angels, but that of Abraham (16—18).

ii. His superiority to Moses, who was only a servant, whereas Christ is Lord (iii. 1—6).

Application of this argument to the believing Hebrews, who are solemnly warned not to copy the example of their unbelieving ancestors who perished in the wilderness (iii. 7—19. iv. 1—13).

iii. His superiority to Aaron and all the other high-priests demonstrated. Christ is the true high-priest, adumbrated by Melchizedek and Aaron (iv. 14—16. v—viii.)

In ch. v. 1—14. and ch. vi. the apostle inserts a parenthetical digression. in which he reproves the Hebrew Christians for their ignorance of the Scriptures.

iv. The typical nature of the tabernacle and its furniture, and of the ordinances there observed (ix. 1—10).

v. The alone sacrifice of Christ is that true and only sacrifice, by which all the Levitical sacrifices are abolished (ix. 11—28. x. 1—18).

PART 2. The application of the preceding arguments and proofs, in which the Hebrews are exhorted,

- i. To faith, prayer, and constancy in the Gospel (x. 19—25). This exhortation is enforced by representations of the danger of wilfully renouncing Christ, after having received the knowledge of the truth, and is interspersed with warnings, exhortations, and encouragements, showing the nature, excellency, and efficacy of faith, illustrated by examples of the most eminent saints, from Abel to the end of the Old Testament dispensation (x. 26—39. xi).
- ii. To patience and diligence in their Christian course, from the testimony of former believers, and by giving particular attention to the example of Christ, and from the paternal design and salutary effect of the Lord's corrections (xii. 1—13).
- iii. To peace and holiness, and to a jealous watchfulness over themselves and each other, enforced by the case of Esau (xii. 14—17).
- iv. To an obedient reception of the Gospel, and a reverential worship of God, from the superior excellency of the Christian dispensation, and the proportionably greater guilt and danger of neglecting it (xii. 18—29).
- v. To brotherly love, hospitality, and compassion; to charity, contentment, and the love of God (ch. xiii. 1—3).
- vi. To recollect the faith and examples of their deceased pastors (4—8).
- vii. To watchfulness against false doctrines in regard to the sacrifice of Christ (9—12).
- viii. To willingness to bear reproach for him, and thanksgiving to God (13—15).
- ix. To subjection to their pastors, and prayer for the apostle (16—19).

PART 3. The conclusion, containing a prayer for the Hebrews, and apostolical salutations (20—25).

The Epistle to the Hebrews, Dr. Hales observes, is a masterly supplement to the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and also a luminous commentary on them; showing that all the legal dispensation was originally designed to be superseded by the new and better covenant of the Christian dispensation, in a connected chain of argument, evincing the profoundest knowledge of both. The internal excellence of this Epistle, as connecting the Old Testament and the New in the most convincing and instructive manner, and elucidating both more

fully than any other Epistle, or perhaps than all of them, places its divine inspiration beyond all doubt. We here find the great doctrines, which are set forth in other parts of the New Testament, stated, proved, and applied to practical purposes, in the most impressive manner *.

* Heidegger, *Enchiridion Biblicum*, pp. 600—611. Dr. Owen's *Exercitationes* on the Epistle to the Hebrews, pp. 1—44. folio edit. Lardner's *Works*, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 381—415; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 324—341. Macknight's *Preface to the Hebrews*, vol. iii. pp. 321—341, 4to edit. or vol. v. pp. 1—27, 8vo edit. Braunii *Comment.* in *Epist. ad Hebræos*, pp. 1—36. Carpozovii *Exercitationes* in *Epist. ad Hebræos*, pp. lxii—cvi. J. A. Ernesti *Lectiones Academicæ* in *Epist. ad Hebræos*, pp. 1—8. 1173—1185, 8vo, Lipsiæ, 1815. Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 192—269. Dr. Hales's *Analysis of Chronology*, vol. ii. pp. 1128—1137. Pritii *Introd. ad Lectionem Nov. Test.* pp. 38—61. 312—318. Rosenmüller, *Scholia* in *Nov. Test.* vol. v. pp. 142—148. Moldenhawer, *Introd. ad Libros Canonicos Vet. et Nov. Test.* pp. 332—340. Whitby's and Scott's *Commentaries on the Epistle to the Hebrews*.

THE Epistles of Saint Paul are followed in the canon of the New Testament by seven Epistles, bearing the names of the apostles James, Peter, Jude, and John. For many centuries, these Epistles have been generally termed catholic Epistles—an appellation for which several conjectures have been assigned. 1. Salmeron and others have imagined that they were denominated Catholic or general Epistles, because they were designed to be transcribed and circulated among the Christian churches, that they might be perused by all; for they contain that one catholic or general doctrine, which was delivered to the churches by the apostles of our Saviour; and which might be read with advantage by the universal church of Christ. In like manner they might be called canonical, as containing canons or general rules and precepts which concern all Christians. Undoubtedly, the doctrines they contain are truly catholic and excellent; and they also contain general rules and directions that concern all Christians, as well as precepts that are binding upon all, so far as their situations and circumstances are similar. But these remarks are equally applicable to the other Books of the New Testament, and Saint Paul's Epistles may, for the same reasons, with equal propriety, be termed catholic or canonical Epistles; for the doctrines there delivered are as catholic and excellent as those comprised in the seven Epistles now under consideration. They likewise contain many general precepts that are obligatory upon all Christians; and the particular precepts are binding so far as the circumstances of Christians in later ages are similar to those referred to by the great apostle of the Gentiles.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES.

SECTION I.

ON THE GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES.

I. *Origin of the appellation Catholic Epistles*;—II. *Its antiquity*;—
Observations on their authenticity;—III. *On the order in which they are usually placed.*

I. THE Epistles of Saint Paul are followed in the canon of the New Testament by seven Epistles, bearing the names of the apostles James, Peter, Jude, and John. For many centuries, these Epistles have been generally termed *catholic Epistles*—an appellation for which several conjectures have been assigned.

1. Salmeron and others have imagined that they were denominated *Catholic* or general Epistles, because they were designed to be transcribed and circulated among the Christian churches, that they might be perused by all; for they contain that one catholic or general doctrine, which was delivered to the churches by the apostles of our Saviour, and which might be read with advantage by the universal church of Christ. In like manner they might be called canonical, as containing *canons* or general rules and precepts which concern all Christians. Unquestionably, the doctrines they contain are truly catholic and excellent; and they also contain general rules and directions that concern all Christians, as well as precepts that are binding upon all, so far as their situations and circumstances are similar. But these remarks are equally applicable to the other Books of the New Testament, and Saint Paul's Epistles may, for the same reasons, with equal propriety, be termed catholic or canonical Epistles; for the doctrines there delivered are as catholic and excellent as those comprized in the seven Epistles now under consideration. They likewise contain many general precepts that are obligatory upon all Christians; and the particular precepts are binding so far as the circumstances of Christians in later ages are similar to those referred to by the great apostle of the Gentiles.

2. Others are of opinion that they received the appellation of catholic or general Epistles, because they were not written to one person, city, or church, like the Epistles of Saint Paul, but to the *catholic church*, Christians in general, or to Christians of several countries, or at least to all the Jewish Christians wherever they were dispersed over the face of the earth. Œcumenius, Leontius, Whitby, and others have adopted this opinion, which however does not appear to be well founded. The Epistle of Saint James was, indeed, written to the Christians of the twelve tribes of Israel in their several dispersions; but it was not inscribed to the Christians in Judea, nor to Gentile Christians in any country whatever. The two Epistles of Peter were written to Christians in general, but particularly those who had been converted from Judaism. The first Epistle of John and the Epistle of Jude were probably written to Jewish Christians; and the second and third Epistles of John were unquestionably written to particular persons.

3. A third opinion is that of Dr. Hammond, adopted by Dr. Macknight and others, which we think is the most probable. It is this: The first Epistle of Peter and the first Epistle of John, having from the beginning been received as authentic, obtained the name of *catholic* or universally acknowledged (and therefore canonical) Epistles, in order to distinguish them from the Epistle of James, the second of Peter, the second and third of John, and the Epistle of Jude, concerning which doubts were at first entertained, and they were considered by many as not being a rule of faith. But their authenticity being at length acknowledged by the generality of the churches, they also obtained the name of catholic or universally received Epistles, and were esteemed of equal authority with the rest. These Epistles were also termed *canonical* by Cassiodorus in the middle of the sixth century, and by the writer of the prologue to these Epistles, erroneously ascribed to Jerome. The propriety of this latter appellation is not satisfactorily ascertained. Du Pin says that some Latin writers have called these Epistles canonical, either confounding the name with catholic, or to denote that they are a part of the canon of the books of the New Testament.

II. The denomination of *Catholic Epistles* is of very considerable antiquity, for Eusebius uses it as a common appellation in the fourth century, and it is probably earlier: for Saint John's first Epistle is repeatedly called a catholic Epistle by Origen, and by Dionysius bishop of Alexandria. Of these Epistles, two only, viz. the first Epistle of Saint Peter and the first Epistle of Saint John were universally received in the

time of Eusebius; though the rest were then well known. And Athanasius, Epiphanius, and later Greek writers, received seven Epistles which they called *catholic*. The same appellation was also given to them by Jerome.

Although the authenticity of the Epistle of James, the second of Peter, the Epistle of Jude, and the second and third Epistles of John, was questioned by some antient fathers, as well as by some modern writers, yet we have every reason to believe that they are the genuine and authentic productions of the inspired writers whose names they bear. The claims to authenticity of these disputed Epistles will be discussed in the following sections. We may however here remark, that the primitive Christians were extremely cautious in admitting any books into their canon, whose genuineness and authenticity they had any reason to suspect. They rejected all the writings forged by heretics in the names of the apostles, and therefore, most assuredly, would not have received any, without previously subjecting them to a severe scrutiny. Now, though these five Epistles were not immediately acknowledged as the writings of the apostles, this only shows that the persons, who doubted, had not received complete and incontestable evidence of their authenticity. But, as they were afterwards universally received, we have every reason to conclude, that, upon a strict examination, they were found to be the genuine productions of the apostles. Indeed, the antient Christians had such good opportunities for examining this subject, they were so careful to guard against imposition, and so well founded was their judgment concerning the books of the New Testament, that, as Dr. Lardner has remarked, no writing which they pronounced genuine has yet been proved spurious; nor have we at this day the least reason to believe any book to be genuine which they rejected.

III. The order, in which these Epistles are placed varies in antient authors; but it is not very material in what manner they are arranged. Could we fix with certainty the date of each Epistle, the most natural order would be according to the time when they were written. Some have placed the three Epistles of Saint John first, probably because he was the beloved disciple of our Lord. Others have given the priority to the two Epistles of Saint Peter, because they considered him as the prince of the apostles. Some have placed the Epistle of James last, possibly because it was later received into the canon by the Christian church in general. By others, this Epistle has been placed first, either because it was conjectured to have been the first written of the seven Epistles, or

because Saint James was supposed to have been the first bishop of Jerusalem, the most antient and venerable, and the first of all the Christian churches; or because the Epistle was written to the Christians of the twelve tribes of Israel, who were the first believers. In the following sections the usual order has been retained*.

* Benson's Preface to the Catholic Epistles. Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 269—271. Pritii Introd. ad Nov. Test. pp. 62—65. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 465—468; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 366, 367. Rosenmüller, Scholia, vol. v. pp. 317, 318.

SECTION II.

ON THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES.

I. *Account of the author of this Epistle*;—II. *Its genuineness and authenticity*;—III. *To whom addressed*;—IV. *Its scope*;—V. *Synopsis of its contents*;—VI. *Observations on this Epistle*.

I. CONSIDERABLE doubts have existed respecting the author of this Epistle. Two apostles of the name of James are mentioned in the New Testament.

The first was the son of Zebedee, a fisherman upon the lake of Galilee, and the brother of the evangelist John; and, as he is uniformly mentioned by the evangelists before John (except in Luke ix. 28), he is supposed to have been the elder of the two. As he was put to death by Herod Agrippa A. D. 44, (Acts xii), it is evident that he was not the author of the Epistle which bears the name of James, because it contains passages which refer to a later period, viz. v. 1—8, which intimates the then immediately approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and the subversion of the Jewish polity.

The other James was the son of Alpheus or Cleophas; he is called the brother, or near relation, of our Lord (Gal. i. 18, 19), and is also generally termed “the Less,” partly to distinguish him from the other James, and probably also because he was lower in stature. That he was an apostle, is evident from various passages in the New Testament, though it does not appear when his designation to this office took place. He was honoured by Jesus Christ with a separate interview soon after his resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 7). He was distinguished as one of the apostles of the circumcision (Acts i. 13); and soon after the death of Stephen, A. D. 34. he seems to have been appointed president or superintendent of the

Christian church at Jerusalem, to have dwelt in that city, and to have presided at the council of the apostles, which was convened there A. D. 49. On account of his distinguished piety and sanctity, he was surnamed "the Just." But, notwithstanding the high opinion that was generally entertained of his character, his life was prematurely terminated by martyrdom, according to the account of Hegesippus, an ecclesiastical historian, who flourished towards the close of the second century. Having made a public declaration of his faith in Christ, the Scribes and Pharisees excited a tumult among the Jews, which began at the temple: or at least they availed themselves of a general disturbance, however it might have originated, and demanded of James an explicit and public declaration of his sentiments concerning the character of Christ. The apostle, standing on an eminence or battlement of the temple, whence he could be heard by the assembled multitude, avowed his faith, and maintained his opinion, that Jesus was the Messiah. The Jews were exasperated, and precipitated him from the battlement where he was standing; and, as he was not killed by the fall, they began to cast stones at him. The holy apostle, kneeling down, prayed to God to forgive his murderers, one of whom at length struck him with a long pole, which terminated his life. According to Hegesippus, this event took place about the time of the passover, A. D. 62. At this time the procurator Festus is supposed to have been dead, and his successor Albinus had not arrived; so that the province was left without a governor. Such a season left the Jews at liberty to gratify their licentious and turbulent passions; and, from their known character and sentiments about this time, they were very likely to embrace the opportunity. We may therefore date the apostle's death about the time assigned by Hegesippus, viz. A. D. 62, in which year it is placed by most learned men*, who are agreed in dating the Epistle of Saint James in the year 61.†

II. A considerable diversity of opinion has prevailed respecting the canonical authority of this Epistle; but though Michaelis

* Hegesippus, cited by Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 23. Eusebius also quotes a passage from Josephus, that is no longer extant in his works, in which the Jewish historian considers the miseries which shortly after overwhelmed his countrymen as a judgment for their murder of James, whom he calls a most righteous person. The genuineness of Josephus's testimony has been questioned, so that no reliance can be placed upon it. Origen and Jerome cite it as authentic, and they are followed by Bishop Pearson, who has defended its genuineness. Dr. Doddridge considers the testimony of Josephus as unworthy of credit; and Dr. Benson thinks that both the accounts of Josephus and Hegesippus are extremely dubious.

† Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 468—502; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 368—384. Dr. Benson's History of Saint James prefixed to his Paraphrase, pp. 1—13. 2d edit. Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 273—292.

and some other modern critics * are undecided on this subject, we apprehend that there is sufficient evidence to prove that it was written in the apostolic age. Clement of Rome has alluded to it twice †. Hermas has not fewer than seven allusions to it ‡, which Dr. Lardner thinks sufficient to prove the antiquity of this Epistle. It is classed by Eusebius among the *Αντιλεγόμενα* or writings, concerning whose authenticity the antients were not unanimous, though the majority was in favour of them. This Epistle was quoted as genuine by Origen, Jerome, Athanasius, and most of the subsequent ecclesiastical writers; and it is found in all the catalogues of the canonical books of Scripture, which were published by the general and provincial councils. But the most decisive proof of its canonical authority is, that the Epistle of Saint James is inserted in the Syriac version of the New Testament, executed at the close of the first or early in the second century, in which the second Epistle of Peter, the second and third of John, the Epistle of Jude, and the Book of Revelation, are omitted. This, Dr. Macknight truly remarks, is an argument of great weight; for certainly the Jewish believers, to whom that Epistle was addressed and delivered, were much better judges of its authenticity than the converted Gentiles, to whom it was not sent, and who had perhaps no opportunity of being acquainted with it until long after it was written.

III. Commentators and critics are by no means agreed concerning the persons to whom this Epistle was addressed. Beza, Cave, Scott, Fabricius, Bishop Tomline, and others, are of opinion that it was addressed to the believing Jews who were dispersed all over the world. Grotius and Dr. Wall think that it was written to all the people of Israel living out of Judea. Michaelis considers it certain that Saint James wrote to persons already converted from Judaism to Christianity; but at the same time he believes, as the apostle was highly respected by the Jews in general, that he wished and designed that it should also be read by the unbelieving Jews, and that this design and intention had some influence on the choice of his materials. Dr. Benson is of opinion that this Epistle was addressed to the converted Jews out of Palestine; but Whitby, Lardner, (and after them Macknight), think it was written to

* It is well known that the venerable Martin Luther, in the earlier part of the reformation, spoke rather in a slighting manner of this Epistle, which he called *straminea epistola*, a strawy epistle, and excluded it at first from the sacred canon on account of its supposed contradiction of Saint Paul concerning the doctrine of justification by faith; but more mature experience and deeper research induced him subsequently to retract his opinion.

† Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 44; 4to, vol. i. p. 301.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 58—60; 4to, vol. i. pp. 309, 310.

the whole Jewish nation, both within and without Judea, whether believers or not. This opinion is grounded on some expressions in the first ten verses of the fourth chapter, and in the first five verses of the fifth chapter, which they suppose to be applicable to unbelievers only. It is true that in the fifth chapter the apostle alludes to the then impending destruction of Jerusalem, and the miseries which soon after befel the unbelieving Jews; but we think, with Bishop Tomline, that in these passages the apostle alludes merely to the great corruptions into which the Hebrew Christians had fallen at that time.

“It does not appear probable that James would write part of his Epistle to believers, and part to unbelievers, without any mention or notice of that distinction. It should also be remembered, that this Epistle contains no general arguments for the truth of Christianity, nor any reproof of those who refused to embrace the Gospel; and therefore, though his lordship admits that the inscription, “To the twelve tribes that are scattered abroad,” might comprehend both unbelieving and believing Jews, yet he is of opinion that it was intended for the believing Jews only, and that Saint James did not expressly make the discrimination, because neither he, nor any other apostle, ever thought of writing to any but Christian converts. “The object of the apostolical Epistles,” he further observes, “was to confirm, and not to convert; to correct what was amiss in those who did believe, and not in those who did not believe. The sense of the above inscription seems to be limited to the believing Jews by what follows almost immediately, “The trial of your faith worketh patience” (i. 3). And again, “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons” (ii. 1). These passages *could not* be addressed to unbelievers.” *

IV. The design of the apostle James, in writing this Epistle, we may collect, from a consideration of its contents, to be as follows:

1. To prevent the Jewish Christians from falling into the vices which abounded among the Jews; such as pride in prosperity, impatience under poverty, or any other affliction; unworthy thoughts of God, and more particularly the looking upon him as the author of moral evil; a valuing themselves on their faith, knowledge, or right opinion, without a virtuous practice; a very criminal partiality for the rich, and a contempt of the poor; an affectation of being doctors or teachers; indulging passion and rash anger, envy and uncharitableness, strife

* Bishop Tomline's Elements of Christian Theology, p. 472.

and contention; abusing the noble faculty of speech, and being guilty of the vices of the tongue, such as cursing and swearing, slander and backbiting, and all rash and unguarded speeches whatever. So, likewise, he wrote to caution them against covetousness and sensuality, distrusting the divine goodness, neglecting prayer, or praying with wrong views, and the want of a due sense of their constant and immediate dependence upon God.

2. To set the Jewish Christians right as to the doctrine of *justification by faith*. For, as they were not to be justified by the *law*, but by the method proposed in the Gospel, and that method was said to be *by faith, without the works of the law*; they, some of them, weakly, and others, perhaps, wilfully, perverted that discovery; and were for understanding, by faith, a bare assent to the truth of the Gospel, without that living, fruitful and evangelical faith, which ‘worketh by love’, and is required of all that would be saved.

3. To intimate unto such of them as laboured under sickness or any bodily disorders occasioned by their crimes, that, if they were penitent, they might hope for a miraculous cure.

4. Another, and a principal reason of Saint James’s writing this Epistle to the Jewish Christians at this time was, to prevent their being impatient under their present persecutions or dark prospects; and to support and comfort them, by assuring them that *the coming of the Lord was at hand*. It is evident from the Acts of the Apostles, and many of the Epistles, that most of the persecutions which befel the Christians arose from the unbelieving Jews. Now, as their destruction was approaching swiftly, the evils, which the Christians suffered from them, were as swiftly drawing to an end. And it was highly proper for Saint James to put them in mind of these things; for the prospect of a speedy deliverance is one of the greatest motives to patience under any calamity.

V. Conformably with this design, the Epistle divides itself into three parts, exclusive of the introduction (i. 1), viz.

PART 1. contains exhortations,

- (1). To joyful patience under trials (i. 2—4).
- (2). To ask wisdom of God, in faith, and with an unwavering mind (5—8).
- (3). To humility (9—11).
- (4). To constancy under temptations, in which part of the Epistle the apostle shows that God is not the author of sin, but the source and giver of every good (12—16).
- (5). To receive the word of God with meekness, and to reduce it to practice (17—27).

PART 2. censures and condemnations,

- (1). Undue respect of persons in their religious assemblies, which is contrary to the law of love (ii. 1—9). It is then shown that the wilful transgression of one commandment violates the whole law of God (10—12).
- (2). Their mistaken notions of justification by faith without works; these mistakes are corrected and illustrated by the examples of Abraham and Rahab (ii. 13—26).
- (3). The affectation of being doctors or teachers of their religion; for as all are offenders, more or less, so vices in such a station would be the more aggravated (iii. 1, 2). Hence the apostle takes occasion to show the fatal effects of an unbridled tongue, together with the difficulty and duty of governing it (3—12); and contrasts in a most beautiful manner the nature and effects of earthly and heavenly wisdom (13—18).
- (4). Those who indulge their lusts and passions (iv. 1—5).
- (5). The proud, who are exhorted to repentance and submission to God (6—10).
- (6). Censoriousness and detraction; annexed are exhortations to immediate and constant dependence upon God, enforced by considerations of the shortness and uncertainty of the present life (11—17).
- (7). Those who placed undue reliance upon their riches (v. 1—6).

PART 3. contains exhortations and cautions, viz.

- (1). An exhortation to patience and meekness under trials, in the hope of a speedy deliverance (v. 7—11).
- (2). A caution against swearing, and an admonition to prayer and praise (12, 13).
- (3). Concerning visiting the sick, and the efficacy of prayer (14—18).
- (4). An encouragement to attempt the conversion of sinners, and the recovery of their offending brethren (19, 20).

VI. This Epistle of Saint James is one of the most pathetic and instructive in the New Testament. Its style possesses all that beautiful and elegant simplicity which so eminently characterizes the sacred writers. Having been written with the design of refuting particular errors which had been introduced among the Jewish Christians, it is not so replete with the peculiar doctrines of Christianity as the Epistles of Saint Paul, or indeed as the other apostolical Epistles; but it contains an admi-

nable summary of those practical duties which are incumbent on all believers, and which it enforces in a manner equally elegant and affectionate*.

* Benson's Preface to Saint James, pp. 14—20. Macknight's Preface, sect. 2—4. Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 292—314. Pritii Introd. ad Nov. Test. pp. 67—79. Harwood's Introd. to the New Test. vol. i. pp. 216—220. Heidegger, Enchirid. Bibl. pp. 612—617.

SECTION III.

ON THE FIRST GENERAL EPISTLE OF PETER.

I. *Account of the apostle Peter*;—II. *Genuineness and canonical authority of this Epistle*;—III. *To whom written*;—IV. *Of the place whence it was sent*;—Date;—V. *Its design and contents*;—VI. *Observations on the style of Saint Peter's two Epistles.*

I. **SIMON**, surnamed Cephass or Peter, which appellation signifies a stone or rock, was the son of Jonas or Jonah, and was born at Bethsaida, on the coast of the sea of Galilee. He had a brother, called Andrew, and they jointly pursued the occupation of fishermen on that lake. These two brothers were hearers of John the Baptist; from whose express testimony, and their own personal conversation with Jesus Christ, they were fully convinced that he was the Messiah (John i. 35—42); and from this time it is probable that they had frequent intercourse with our Saviour, and were witnesses of some of the miracles wrought by him, particularly that performed at Cana in Galilee (John ii. 1, 2). Both Peter and Andrew seem to have followed their trade, until Jesus Christ called them to “follow him,” and promised to make them both “fishers of men” (Matt. iv. 18, 19. Mark i. 17. Luke v. 10). From this time they became his companions, and when he completed the number of his apostles, they were included among them. Peter, in particular, was honoured with his master's intimacy, together with James and John. With them Peter was present when our Lord restored the daughter of Jairus to life (Mark v. 37. Luke viii. 51), when he was transfigured on the mount (Matt. xvii. 1. Mark ix. 2. Luke ix. 28), and during his agony in the garden (Matt. xxvi. 36—56. Mark xiv. 32—42); and on various other occasions Peter received peculiar marks of his master's confidence. At the time when Peter was called to the apostleship, he was married, and seems to have removed, in

consequence, from Bethsaida to Capernaum, where his wife's family resided. It appears also that when our Lord left Nazareth, and came and dwelt at Capernaum (Matt. iv. 13), he took up his occasional residence at Peter's house, whither the people resorted to him *.

In the evangelical history of this apostle, the distinguishing features of his character are very signally portrayed; and it in no small degree enhances the credibility of the sacred historians, that they have blended without disguise several traits of his precipitance and presumption, with the honourable testimony, which the narration of facts affords to the sincerity of his attachment to Christ, and the fervour of his zeal in the cause of his blessed master. His ardour and forwardness are apparent on many occasions. He is the first to reply to all questions proposed by our Lord to the whole collective body of disciples, of which we have a memorable instance in Matt. xvi. 13—16. He hesitates not to rebuke our Lord himself, when he first announced his future sufferings. The ardour of his spirit is strikingly evinced in his venturing to walk on the sea to meet his master (Matt. xv. 28—31); and still more decisively in his conduct towards the high-priest's servant, whom he smote with his sword, and whose right ear he cut off, when the Jewish officers were about to apprehend our Lord †. His presumption and self-confidence sufficiently appear in his solemn asseverations that he would never abandon his master (Matt. xxvi. 33); and his weakness, in his subsequent denial of Christ: for, though Peter intrepidly followed him afar off to the high-priest's palace, when all the other disciples forsook him and fled, yet he thrice disowned him, each time under circumstances of peculiar aggravation ‡. It does not appear that Peter followed Christ any further; probably remorse and shame prevented him from attending the crucifixion, as we find Saint John did. On the day of Christ's resurrection, after appearing to Mary Magdalen and some other women, the next person to whom he showed himself was Peter. On another occasion (John xxi.) our Lord afforded him an opportunity of thrice professing his love for him, and charged him to feed the flock of Christ with fidelity and tenderness.

After our Saviour's ascension, Peter took an active part in the affairs of the infant church. It was he who proposed the election of a successor to the traitor Judas (Acts i. 15—26),

* Luke iv. 40. Matt. viii. 16. xvii. 24—27. Mark i. 32. 34.

† Matt. xxvi. 51—54. Mark xiv. 46, 47. Luke xxii. 50, 51. John xviii. 10, 11

‡ Matt. xxvi. 69—75. Mark xiv. 66—72. Luke xxii. 54—62. John xvii. 15—18

and on the ensuing day of Pentecost he preached Christ so effectually, that three thousand souls were added to the church (Acts ii. 14—41). We next find him, in company with John, healing a lame man at the gate of the temple, which was followed by an address to the people, many of whom were convinced and embraced the Gospel (Acts iii). He was next imprisoned, brought before the sanhedrim, threatened, and dismissed (iv). After the death of Ananias and Sapphira, whose fraud Peter detected and reprehended (iv), Peter and John preached successfully at Samaria (viii), and performed various miracles (ix. x). During his apostolical travels in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, he converted Cornelius the Roman centurion, the first Gentile convert who was admitted into the church without circumcision, or any injunction to comply with the Mosaic observances (x); and, on his return to Jerusalem, he satisfied the Jewish Christians that God had granted repentance unto life to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews (xi. 18). Soon after this, being apprehended by Herod Agrippa, A. D. 44, who designed to put him to death, Peter was miraculously delivered by an angel (xii). In the apostolic council held at Jerusalem A. D. 49, Peter took an active part, declaring his opinion most explicitly, that the yoke of the ceremonial law ought not to be imposed on the Gentiles (Acts xv. 7—10). From this time Peter is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, nor have we any certain information respecting his subsequent labours. It appears however that he afterwards preached at Antioch (Gal. ii. 11); and, from his inscribing his first Epistle to the Hebrew Christians dispersed in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia Minor, and Bithynia, (1 Pet. i. 1, 2), he is supposed to have preached in those countries. At length he arrived at Rome, in the course of the year 63*, subsequently to Paul's departure from that city, during the reign of the emperor Nero; and, after preaching the Gospel for some time, he was crucified there with his head downwards. Clement of Alexandria adds, from an antient tradition current in his time, that Peter's wife suffered martyrdom a short time before him †.

* We have seen (p. 490 *supra*) that Saint Paul quitted Rome in the early part of A. D. 63, at which time it is evident that Saint Peter had not arrived there; for if these two eminent servants of Christ had met in that city, he would have been mentioned by Saint Paul in some of the Epistles, which he wrote thence, towards the close of his imprisonment.

† Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 509—561; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 388—414. Scaliger, Salmasius, Frederic Spanheim, and others, have denied that Saint Peter was ever at Rome; but the contrary opinion has been advocated by Cave, Bishop Pearson, Le Clerc,

II. The genuineness and canonical authority of the first Epistle of Peter have never been disputed. It appears to be twice referred to by Clement of Rome*; it is *twelve* times distinctly quoted by Polycarp†, and is once cited in the Epistle of the churches of Vienne and Lyons‡. It was received by Theophilus bishop of Antioch, and quoted by Papias, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian; and Eusebius informs us that it was universally acknowledged to be the production of Saint Peter in the fourth century§, since which time its authenticity has never been questioned.

III. Concerning the persons to whom this Epistle was sent, different opinions have prevailed; Beza, Grotius, Cave, Mill, Tillemont, Dr. Hales, Rosenmüller and others, suppose that it was addressed to the Jewish Christians who were scattered through the countries mentioned in the inscription; while Lord Barrington and Dr. Benson think that it was written to proselytes of the Gate, and Michaelis is of opinion, that it was directed to the Jews, that is, to those native heathens in Pontus, &c. who were first proselytes to Judaism, and then were converted to Christianity. But Estius, Whitby, Pott, Lardner, Macknight, and Bishop Tomline think that it was written to Christians in general, whether Jews or Gentiles, residing in the countries above noticed.

In this diversity of opinion, the only rule of determination must be the inscription, together with such other circumstances as may be collected from the apostolical history or the Epistle itself. The inscription runs thus: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1 Pet. i. 1). That the persons here addressed were believing Jews, and not believing Gentiles, we apprehend will appear from the following considerations.

1. We learn from Acts ii. 5. 9. that there were at the feast of Pentecost, waiting at Jerusalem, "Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven, dwellers in Judea, Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia." Whence it is evident that there were Jews *dispersed* in those countries.

Basnage, and particularly by Dr. Lardner, who has clearly shown that Peter never was bishop of Rome. The pretended primacy of Peter, on which the Romanists insist so much, has been unanswerably refuted by Dr. Barrow in his *Treatise on the Pope's Supremacy*, forming vol. i. of his works.

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 44; 4to, vol. i. p. 302.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 98, 99; 4to, vol. i. pp. 331, 332.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 152; 4to, vol. i. p. 362.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 562, 563; 4to, vol. iii. p. 415.

2. Saint Peter, by agreement among the apostles, had the *ministry of the circumcision* committed to him peculiarly (Gal. ii. 8). It is therefore more probable that he wrote to Jews than to Gentiles.

3. The persons to whom the apostle writes are termed *Strangers, scattered*, Παρεπιδημοι; which word properly denotes strangers from another country. Such were the Jews, who, through persecution in Judea, fled into foreign countries; whereas believing Gentiles were rather called Proselytes (Acts ii. 10).

4. They are said to be “redeemed from their vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers” (1 Pet. i. 18); in which description the apostle plainly refers to the traditions of the Jewish rabbins and elders.

5. The persons to whom Peter writes are styled, “A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people” (1 Pet. ii. 9), which are the praises of the Jewish people (Exod. xix. 6), and are in no respect applicable to the Gentiles.

On these grounds we conclude that this Epistle was addressed to those dispersed Hebrew Christians, afflicted in their dispersion, to whom the apostles James and Paul had respectively addressed their Epistles.

IV. It appears from 1 Pet. v. 12, 13, that this Epistle was written from Babylon, and sent to the Jews by ‘Silvanus, a faithful brother;’ but whether Babylon is to be understood here, literally or mystically, as the city of the same name in Mesopotamia or Egypt, or rather Rome, or Jerusalem, has been long and warmly contested by the learned. Bishop Pearson, Mill, and Le Clerc, are of opinion that the apostle speaks of Babylon in Egypt. Erasmus, Drusius, Beza, Dr. Lightfoot, Basnage, Beausobre, Dr. Cave, Wetstein, Drs. Benson and A. Clarke, think that Peter intended Babylon in Assyria; Michaelis, that it was Babylon in Mesopotamia, or rather Selucia on the Tigris. And Grotius, Drs. Whitby, Lardner, Macknight, and Hales, Bishop Tomline, and all the learned of the Romish communion, are of opinion that by Babylon Peter meant, figurately, *Rome*, which city is called Babylon by the apostle John (Rev. xvii. xviii).

From a careful examination of the evidence adduced for the literal meaning of the word Babylon, and of the evidence for its figurative or mystical application to Rome, we think that the *latter* was intended, and for the following reasons.

1. This opinion is confirmed by the general testimony of antiquity, which, Dr. Lardner remarks, is of no small weight. Eusebius * relates, on the authority of Clement of Alexandria and Papias bishop of Jerusalem, that Mark's Gospel was written at the request of Peter's hearers in Rome; and that "Peter makes mention of Mark in his first Epistle, which was written at Rome itself. And that he (Peter) signifies this, calling that city figuratively Babylon, in these words, '*the church which is at Babylon, elected jointly with you, saluteth you. And so doth Mark my son.*'" This passage of Eusebius is transcribed by Jerome †, who adds positively, that "Peter mentions this Mark in his first Epistle, figuratively denoting Rome by the name of Babylon; *the church which is at Babylon,*" &c. Œcumenius, Bede, and other fathers, also understand Rome by Babylon. It is generally thought that Peter and John gave to Rome the name of Babylon, figuratively to signify that it would resemble Babylon in its idolatry, and in its opposition to and persecution of the church of God; and that, like Babylon, it will be utterly destroyed. But these things the inspired writers did not think fit to say plainly concerning Rome, for a reason which every reader may understand.

2. It is not probable that Peter ever visited Babylon in Chaldaea, from the total silence of ecclesiastical history. And Babylon in Egypt was too small and insignificant to be the subject of consideration.

3. Silvanus or Silas, the bearer, was "*the faithful brother,*" or associate of Paul in most of the churches which he had planted. And though he was not at Rome with the apostle when he wrote his last Epistle to Timothy, he might naturally have come thither soon after; and have been sent by Paul and Peter jointly, to confirm the churches in Asia Minor, &c. which he had assisted in planting. But Silvanus, Paul, and Peter had no connexion with Babylon, which lay beyond their district; and, therefore, they were not likely at any time to build upon another's foundation. The Gospel was preached in Persia, or Parthia, by the apostle Thaddeus, or Jude, according to Cosmas; and Abulfaragi reckons, that the antient Syriac version of the New Testament was made in his time, and probably, by his authority, for the use of the Oriental churches ‡.

4. The Jews, to whom this Epistle was written, were fond of mystical appellations, especially in their captivities; Edom

* Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 15.

† De Viris Illust. c. 8.

‡ Lardner, 8vo, vol. v. p. 272. 4to, vol. iii. p. 55. Michaelis, vol. ii. p. 30.

was a frequent title for their Heathen oppressors; and as Babylon was the principal scene of their first captivity, it was highly probable, that Rome, the principal scene of their second, and which so strongly resembled the former in her "abominations, her idolatries, and persecutions of the saints," should be denominated by the same title. And this argument is corroborated by the similar usage of the Apocalypse, where the mystical application is unquestionable (Rev. xiv. 8. xvi. 19. xviii. 2, &c.). It is highly probable, indeed, that John borrowed it from Peter; or rather, that both derived it by *inspiration*, from the prophecy of Isaiah (xxi. 9).

5. The second Epistle is generally agreed to have been written *shortly* before Peter's death; but a journey from Babylon to Rome (where he unquestionably suffered) must have employed a long time, even by the shortest route that could be taken. And Peter must have passed through Pontus, &c. in his way to Rome, and therefore it would have been unnecessary for him to write. Writing from Rome, indeed, the case was different, as he never expected to see them more.

As Saint Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome A. D. 64 or 65, and we have no evidence that he arrived there before the year 63, we are warranted in dating this Epistle in A. D. 64.

V. It appears from the Epistle itself that it was written during a period of general calamity, when the Hebrew Christians were exposed to severe persecutions. The design of this Epistle, therefore, is partly to support them under their afflictions and trials, and also to instruct them how to behave under persecution. It likewise appears, from the history of that time, that the Jews were uneasy under the Roman yoke, and that the destruction of their polity was approaching. On this account the Christians are exhorted to honour the emperor (Nero), and the presidents whom he sent into the provinces, and to avoid all grounds of being suspected of sedition or other crimes that would violate the peace and welfare of society. And, finally, as their character and conduct were liable to be aspersed and misrepresented by their enemies, they are exhorted to lead a holy life, that they might stop the mouths of their enemies, put their calumniators to shame, and win others over to their religion, by their holy and Christian conversation.

The Epistle may be conveniently divided into four sections, exclusive of the introduction and conclusion.

The introduction (i. 1, 2).

SECTION 1. contains an exhortation to the Jewish Christians, to persevere steadfastly in the faith with all patience

and cheerfulness, and to maintain a holy conversation, notwithstanding all their sufferings and persecutions. This is enforced by the consideration of the peculiar blessings and privileges which were freely bestowed upon them (i. 3—25. ii. 1—10).

SECTION 2. comprizes an exhortation,

- (1). To a holy conversation in general (ii. 11—12).
- (2). To a particular discharge of their several duties, as
Dutiful subjects to their sovereign (13—15).
Servants to their masters (16—25).
Husbands to their wives (iii. 1—13).

SECTION 3. contains an exhortation to patience, submission, and to holiness of life, enforced,

- (1). By considering the example of Christ (iii. 14—18).
- (2). By reminding them how God punished the disobedient in the days of Noah (19—22).
- (3). By reminding them of the example of Christ, and that by their conversion they became dead to the flesh (iv. 1—6).
- (4). By showing them the approaching destruction of the Jewish polity (7—11).
- (5). By showing them that, under the Gospel they should consider afflictions as their portion, and as matter of joy (12—19).

SECTION 4. Directions to the ministers of the churches, and the people, how to behave towards each other (v. 1—11).

The conclusion (v. 12—14).

VI. As the design of this Epistle is excellent, so its excellence, in the judgment of the best critics, does not fall short of its design. Erasmus pronounces it to be worthy of the prince of the apostles, and adds that it is sparing in words, but full of sense. That great critic, Joseph Scaliger, calls it majestic; and Ostervald * says that the first Epistle of Peter is one of the finest books in the New Testament; that the second is written with great strength and majesty, and that both of them evidently show their divine origin. Every part, indeed, of Saint Peter's writings indicates a mind that felt the power of the doctrines he delivered, and a soul that glowed with the most ardent zeal for the spread of the Gospel. His style expresses the noble vehemence and fervour of his spirit, his perfect knowledge of the Gospel, and his strong assurance of the truth and certainty of its doctrines. He writes

* *Nouv. Test.* pp. 276, 281. edit. Neufchatel, 1772, folio.

with the authority of the first man in the college of the apostles. Little solicitous about the choice or harmonious disposition of words, his thoughts and his heart were absorbed with the grand truths which he was divinely commissioned to proclaim, and the indispensable obligation of Christians to adorn their profession by a holy life. Hence, in his first Epistle, he writes with such energy and rapidity of style, that we can scarcely perceive the pauses of his discourse, or the distinction of his periods. And in his second Epistle he exposes with holy indignation and vehemence the abandoned principles and practices of those false teachers and false prophets, who in those early times sprang up in the Christian church, and disseminated their pernicious tenets with so much art and cunning. His prophetic description of the general conflagration, and of the end of all terrestrial things (2 Pet. iii. 8—12), is very awful, and was evidently described so minutely and circumstantially, in order to induce us to prepare for it. We see the planetary heavens, and this our earth, enveloped in the devouring flames: we hear the groans of an expiring world, and the crash of nature tumbling into universal ruin. How solemn and affecting is this practical inference! (2 Pet. iii. 11.) “*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what sort of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.*” The meanest soul and lowest imagination cannot think of that time, and the awful descriptions of it, which we meet with in this place, and in several other passages of Holy Writ, without the greatest emotion and the deepest impressions*.

* Blackwall's Sacred Classics, vol. i. pp. 302—304. Pritii Introd. ad Nov. Test. pp. 79—89. Macknight's Preface to 1 Peter. Benson's History of Saint Peter and his First Epistle, pp. 137—159. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 562—583; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 414—425. Dr. Hales's Analysis, vol. ii. book ii. pp. 1144—1147. Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 315—346.

SECTION IV.

ON THE SECOND GENERAL EPISTLE OF PETER.

I. *Its genuineness and canonical authority*;—II. *Date*;—III. *Scope, and synopsis of its contents.*

I. **SOME** doubts were entertained by the primitive churches respecting the authenticity of this Epistle, which has been received as the genuine production of Saint Peter ever since the fourth century, except by the Syrian church, in which it is

read as an excellent book, though not of canonical authority. We have, however, the most satisfactory evidence of its genuineness and authenticity. Clement of Rome * has three allusions to the second chapter, and one to the third chapter, of this Epistle; and it is twice referred to by Hermas †, once by Justin Martyr ‡, and also by Athenagoras §. Although this Epistle does not appear to be cited by any writer of the third century, yet in the fourth and following centuries it was acknowledged by Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, the council of Laodicea, Epiphanius, Jerome, Rufinus, Augustine, and all subsequent writers. Eusebius || places it among the *Αντιλεγόμενα Γραφαι*, or books whose canonical authority was doubted by some, though mentioned and approved by most of the antients, but he plainly distinguishes it from such as were confessedly spurious. He also relates ** from the tradition of his predecessors, that, though it was not acknowledged as part of the New Testament, yet, because to many it seemed useful, it was diligently read together with the other Scriptures. On this statement of Eusebius, Le Clerc forcibly remarks, that if it had not been Saint Peter's, it would not have seemed useful to any man of tolerable prudence, seeing the writer in many places pretends to be Saint Peter himself: for it would be *noxious* on account of its being a forgery, as well as unpardonable in any man to forge another man's name, or pretend to be the person he is not ††. After a diligent comparison of the first Epistle with that which is ascribed to Peter as the second, Michaelis pronounces the agreement between them to be such, that, if the second was not written by Saint Peter, as well as the first, the person who forged it not only possessed the power of imitation in a very unusual degree, but understood likewise the design of the first Epistle, with which the antients do not appear to have been acquainted. Now, if this be true, the supposition that the second Epistle was not written by Saint Peter himself involves a contradiction. Nor is it credible, that a pious impostor of the first or second century should have imitated Saint Peter so successfully as to betray no marks of a forgery: for the spurious productions of those ages, which were sent into the world under the name of apostles, are for the most part very unhappy imitations, and discover very evident marks that they were not written by the persons to

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 45; 4to, vol. i. p. 302.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 61; 4to, vol. i. p. 311.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 126; 4to, vol. ii. p. 347.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 186; 4to, vol. i. p. 381.

|| Hist. Eccl. lib. 3. c. 25.

** Ibid. lib. 3. c. 3.

†† Clerici, Hist. Eccl. p. 442, note.

whom they were ascribed. Other productions of this kind betray their origin by the poverty of their materials, or by the circumstance, that instead of containing original thoughts, they are nothing more than a rhapsody of sentiments collected from various parts of the Bible, and put together without plan or order. This charge cannot possibly be laid to the second Epistle of Saint Peter, which is so far from containing materials derived from other parts of the Bible, that the third chapter exhibits the discussion of a totally new subject. Its resemblance to the Epistle of Saint Jude will be hardly urged as an argument against it: for no doubt can be made, that the second Epistle of Saint Peter was, in respect to the Epistle of Saint Jude, the original, and not the copy. Lastly, it is extremely difficult, even for a man of the greatest talents, to forge a writing in the name of another, without sometimes inserting what the pretended author either would not or could not have said; and to support the imposture in so complete a manner, as not to militate in a single instance, either against his character, or against the age in which he lived. Now in the second Epistle of Saint Peter, though it has been a subject of examination full seventeen hundred years, nothing has hitherto been discovered, which is unsuitable, either to the apostle or to the apostolic age. We have no reason therefore to believe that the second Epistle of Saint Peter is spurious, especially as it is difficult to comprehend what motive could have induced a Christian, whether orthodox or heretic, to attempt the fabrication of such an Epistle, and then falsely ascribe it to Saint Peter*.

Various reasons, indeed, have been assigned, why this Epistle was not earlier acknowledged as the writing of Saint Peter. Jerome informs us that the difference of style between this and the former Epistle was in his day the principal cause of its authenticity being disputed; and the same objection has been adopted by Salmasius and other modern writers. But this remarkable difference in style is confined to the second chapter of the second Epistle. No objection, however, can be drawn from this circumstance: for the subject of that chapter is different from the rest of Saint Peter's writings, and nothing is so well known as that different subjects suggest different styles. Further, when a person expresses his own sentiments, he writes in his own proper style, whatever that may be: but when he translates from another, he naturally follows the

* Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 350.

genius of the original, and adopts the figures and metaphors of the author before him. Saint Peter, when describing the character of some flagitious impostors, feels an indignation which he cannot suppress: it breaks out, therefore, in the bold and animated figures of some antient Hebrew writer, who had left behind him a description of the false prophets of his own, or perhaps of earlier times*.

To these considerations we may add, that, being written a short time before the apostle's martyrdom, and not having been so publicly avowed by him, and clearly known to be his, the scrupulous caution of the church hesitated about admitting it into the second canon, until *internal evidence* convinced the most competent judges that it was fully entitled to that high distinction. And since this Epistle, having passed through so severe and accurate a scrutiny, was received as genuine by those who were in those early times most capable of deciding, and who have given sufficient evidence of their care and capacity for judging of its authenticity—and since it has been transmitted to us in every manuscript and antient version (the Syriac excepted), we have every satisfactory *external* proof that the second Epistle of Saint Peter is the undoubted production of that holy and zealous apostle. Let us now briefly consider the internal evidence for its authenticity.

1. The writer styles himself Symeon Peter (i. 1. Gr.); from which circumstance we conclude that this Epistle was written by the apostle Peter. Should it be objected that the apostle's name was *Simon*, not *Simeon*, Dr. Macknight replies, that, though his name was commonly written Simon in Greek, yet its Hebrew form was Simeon; and so it is written in the Old Testament history of Jacob's sons, and so Peter is expressly termed in Acts xv. 14. (Gr.) It has further been objected, that in the first Epistle, which is unquestionably genuine, he has styled himself simply *Peter*, and not Simon Peter. But it is worthy of observation, that Saint Luke has called this apostle *Simon Peter*, and that Saint John has given him that name not less than seventeen times in his Gospel—perhaps (Dr. Macknight thinks) to show that he was the author of the

* Such is the opinion of Bishop Sherlock, which has been generally adopted. Bishop Tomline, however, deems this conjecture very improbable, and accounts for the difference of style in the second chapter of this Epistle, by supposing that the apostle's pen was guided by a higher degree of inspiration than when writing in a didactic manner, and that he wrote with the animation and energy of the prophetic style: but his lordship does not think that there is any thing, either in phrase or sentiment, which is inconsistent with the acknowledged writings of Saint Peter. *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. i. p. 490.

Epistle which begins with *Symeon Peter, a servant and an apostle, &c.* The same eminent critic is further of opinion, that though Peter's surname only is mentioned in the inscription of the first letter, because he was sufficiently known by it, yet he might, for the greater dignity, insert his name complete in the second Epistle; because he intended authoritatively to rebuke the false teachers who had already arisen, or might thereafter arise. Since, therefore, *Symeon Peter* is the same as Simon Peter, no objection can be raised against the authenticity of this Epistle on account of the name: neither does it afford any countenance to the opinion of Grotius, that this Epistle was written by Simeon bishop of Jerusalem, who succeeded James the Lord's brother—an opinion that is not only destitute of all authority from antiquity, but is also inconsistent with the whole tenor of the Epistle itself.

2. There are several incidental allusions to particular circumstances in this Epistle, which answer to no other person but Peter. Thus, the writer of it testifies that he *must shortly put off his tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus had shown him* (2 Peter i. 14). Now Christ foretold or showed this to none of his apostles besides Peter (John xxi. 19).—Again, the writer of this Epistle was with Christ upon the mount at his transfiguration, beheld his majesty, and heard the voice of the Father, from Heaven, when he was with Christ on the holy mount (2 Pet. i. 16—18). Now there were only three of Christ's apostles permitted to witness this transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1, 2), viz. Peter, James, and John. The Epistle in question, therefore, must be written by one of them, and consequently must be of apostolical authority; but as it never was ascribed to James or John, nor is there any reason for attributing it to them, it follows that this Epistle is the production of Peter.—Once more, the author of it calls this his *second Epistle* (iii. 1), and intimates that he wrote both his letters to the same persons, viz. the believing Hebrews. Compare 1 Pet. i. 1. 2 Pet. i. 1. with 2 Pet. iii. 1, 2. Consequently, as the authenticity of the first Epistle was never disputed, the second was unquestionably written by the same person, viz. Peter.

3. Whoever wrote this Epistle calls Paul his beloved brother (iii. 15, 16), commends him, and approves the authority of his Epistles, which none but an apostle could venture to affirm.

4. A holy and apostolical spirit breathes throughout the whole of this Epistle; in which we find predictions of things to come, and admonitions against false teachers and apostasy, together with exhortations to a godly life, and condemnations of

sin, “ delivered with an earnestness and feeling which show the author to have been incapable of imposing a forged writing upon the world; and that his sole design in this Epistle was to promote the interests of truth and virtue in the world.”

5. Lastly, The style is the same in both Epistles. The sentences in the second Epistle are seldom fluent and well rounded, but have the same extension as those in the first*. There are also repetitions of the same words, and allusions to the same events. Thus the word *ἀναστροφῇ*, *conversation* or *behaviour*, which is so peculiar to the first Epistle†, likewise occurs in the second‡, though less frequently than in the former. So the deluge, which is not a common subject in the apostolical Epistles, is mentioned in 1 Pet. iii. 20, and also in 2 Pet. ii. 5; and in both places the circumstance is noted, that eight persons only were saved, though in neither place does the subject require that the number should be particularly specified. Michaelis observes, that Peter was not the only apostle who knew how many persons were saved in the ark; but he only, who by habit had acquired a familiarity with the subject, would ascertain the precise number, where his argument did not depend upon it.

The result of all these evidences, both external and internal, is, that the second Epistle of Peter is unquestionably the production of that apostle, and claims to be received and studied with the same devout care and attention as the rest of the inspired writings of the New Testament.

II. That Peter was old and near his death when he wrote this Epistle, is evident from ch. i. 14; and that it was written soon after the first Epistle, appears from the apology he makes (i. 13. 15.) for writing this second Epistle to the Hebrew Christians. Dr. Lardner thinks it not unlikely that, soon after the apostle had sent away Silvanus with his first letter to the Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia Minor, and Bithynia, some persons came from those countries to Rome (whither there was a frequent and general resort from all parts); who brought him information concerning the state of religion among them. These accounts induced him to write a second time, most probably at the beginning of A. D. 65, in order to establish in the faith the Christians among whom he had laboured.

* See the observations on Saint Peter's style, pp. 613, 614. *supra*.

† See 1 Pet. i. 15. 18. ii. 12. iii. 1, 2. 16.

‡ 2 Pet. ii. 7. iii. 11.

III. The scope of this Epistle is to confirm the doctrines and instructions delivered in the former; to establish the Hebrew Christians in the truth and profession of the Gospel; to caution them against false teachers, whose tenets and practices he largely describes; and to warn them to disregard those profane scoffers, who made or should make a mock of Christ's coming to judgment; which having asserted and described, he exhorts them to prepare for that event by a holy and unblameable conversation. The Epistle consists of three parts, viz.

PART 1. The introduction (i. 1, 2).

PART 2. Having stated the blessings to which God had called them, the apostle,

(1). Exhorts the Christians, who had received these precious gifts, to endeavour to improve in the most substantial graces and virtues (i. 3—11).

(2). To this he incites them,

i. From the firmness of true teachers (i. 12—21).

ii. From the wickedness of false teachers, whose tenets and practices he exposes, and predicts the divine judgments against them (ii).

(3). He guards them against scoffers and impostors, who he foretels would ridicule their expectation of Christ's coming,

i. By confuting their false assertions (iii. 1—7).

ii. By showing the reason why that great day was delayed; and describing its circumstances and consequences, adding suitable exhortations and encouragements to diligence and holiness (iii. 8—14).

PART 3. The conclusion, in which the apostle,

(1). Declares the agreement of his doctrine with that of Saint Paul (iii. 15, 16).

(2). And repeats the sum of the Epistle (iii. 17, 18).

On account of the similarity of style and subject between the second chapter of this Epistle and that of Jude, Dr. Benson and Michaelis place the latter immediately after the second Epistle of Peter*.

* Pritii *Introd. ad Lect. Nov. Test.* pp. 90—99. Moldenhawer, *Introd. ad Libros Biblicos*, pp. 352—355. Heidegger, *Enchirid. Bibl.* pp. 624—628. Benson on the Catholic Epistles, pp. 321—329. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 562—583; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 414—425. Macknight's Preface to 2 Peter. Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 346—363.

SECTION V.

ON THE FIRST GENERAL EPISTLE OF JOHN.

I. *Genuineness and canonical authority*;—II. *Date*;—III. *Of the persons to whom this Epistle was written*;—IV. *Its occasion and scope*;—*Account of the false teachers whose principles are refuted by the apostle*;—V. *Synopsis of its contents*;—VI. *The question concerning the authenticity of the disputed clause in 1 John, v. 7, 8, considered.*

1. **ALTHOUGH** no name is prefixed to this book, its authenticity as a genuine production of the apostle John is unquestionable. It was almost universally received as his composition in the Eastern and Western churches, and appears to be alluded to by Hermas *. It is distinctly cited by Polycarp †, and in the Epistle of the churches of Vienne and Lyons ‡, and is declared to be genuine by Papias §, Irenæus ||, Clement of Alexandria **, Tertullian ††, Origen ‡‡, Cyprian, Eusebius, Athanasius, and all subsequent ecclesiastical writers § §. A still more decisive testimony is the fact that it is found in the Syriac version of the New Testament, executed at the close of the first or very early in the second century, and which contains only those books of the New Testament, respecting whose authenticity no doubts were ever entertained. But, besides this external proof, we have the strongest internal evidence that this Epistle was written by the apostle John, in the very close analogy of its sentiments and expressions to those of his Gospel |||. There is also a remarkable peculiarity in the style of this apostle, and particularly in this Epistle. His sentences, considered *separately*, are exceedingly clear and intelligible; but, when we search for their connexion, we frequently meet with greater difficulties than we experience even in the Epistles of Saint Paul. Artless simplicity and benevolence, blended with singular modesty and candour, together with a wonderful sublimity of sentiment, are the characteristics of this Epistle; in which

* Lardner's Works, 8vo. vol. ii. p. 61; 4to, vol. i. p. 311.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 99; 4to, vol. i. p. 332.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 152; 4to, vol. i. p. 362.

§ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 108, 109, 113; 4to, vol. i. pp. 337, 340.

|| Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 168; 4to, vol. i. p. 370.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 227; 4to, vol. i. p. 370.

†† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 275; 4to, vol. i. p. 429.

‡‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 481; 4to, vol. i. p. 540.

§ § Ibid. 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 584, 585; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 525, 526.

||| See several instances of this analogy, pp. 346, 347. *supra*, note.

Saint John appears to have delivered his conceptions as they arose in his mind, and in the form of aphorisms, in order that they might produce the greater effect. In his Gospel John does not content himself with simply affirming or denying a thing, but denies its contrary to strengthen his affirmation; and in like manner, to strengthen his denial of a thing, he affirms its contrary. See John i. 20. iii. 36. v. 24. vi. 22. The same manner of expressing things strongly occurs in this Epistle. See ii. 4. 27. and iv. 2, 3. In his Gospel also, Saint John frequently uses the pronoun or οὗτος, αὕτη, τούτο, *this*, in order to express things emphatically. See i. 19. iii. 19. vi. 29. 40. 50. and xvii. 3. In the Epistle the same emphatical mode of expression obtains. Compare i. 5. ii. 25. iii. 23. v. 3, 4. 6. and 14. *

II. With regard to the date of this Epistle, there is a considerable diversity of opinion. Drs. Benson, Hales, and others, place it in the year 68; Bishop Tomline in 69: Lampe, after the first Jewish war, and before the apostle's exile in Patmos; Dr. Lardner, A. D. 80, or even later; Mill and Le Clerc, in A. D. 91 or 92; Beausobre, L'Enfant, and Du Pin, at the end of the first century; and Grotius, Hammond, Whitby, Michaelis, and Macknight, place it before the destruction of Jerusalem, but without specifying the precise year. The most probable of these various opinions is that which assigns an early date to this Epistle, viz. before the destruction of Jerusalem and the subversion of the Jewish polity. For,

In the first place, the expression in ii. 18. *It is the last hour*, is more applicable to the last hour or time of the duration of the Jewish state than to any later period, especially as the apostle adds—*And as ye have heard that Antichrist is coming, even so now there have been many Antichrists; whence we know that it is the last hour;*" in which passage the apostle evidently alludes to our Lord's prediction concerning the springing up of false Christs, false teachers, and false prophets, before the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. xxiv. 5—25). Some critics, however, contend that the 'last time' may allude, not to the destruction of that city, but to the close of the apostolic age. But Michaelis confirms the propriety of this argument for the early date of this Epistle, by observing that Saint John's Gospel was opposed to heretics, who maintained the same opinions as are opposed in this Epistle; which tenets he has

* Lampe, Commentarius in Evangelium Johannis, tom. i. Prolegomena, p. 104. Macknight's Preface to 1 John, sect. 2. Langii Hermeneutica Sacra, pars ii. De Interpretatione Epistolarum Johannis, pp. 167—175.

confuted by argument in his Gospel, whereas in the Epistle he expresses only his disapprobation. Michaelis therefore concludes, that the Epistle was written before the Gospel; because if Saint John had already given a complete confutation when he wrote this Epistle, he would have thought it unnecessary to have again declared the falsehood of such opinions.

Secondly, The expression (ii. 13, 14), *ye have known him from the beginning,*” applies better to the disciples, immediately before Jerusalem was destroyed, than to the few who might have been alive at the late date which some critics assign to this Epistle. In the verses just cited, the *fathers* or *elders* are twice distinguished from the “*young men*” and the “*children,*” by this circumstance, that they had seen him during his ministry, or after his resurrection. Thirty-five years after our Lord’s resurrection and ascension, when Jerusalem was destroyed, many such persons might have been alive; whereas in 98, or even in 92, there could not have been many persons alive of that description.

To these two arguments for the early date of Saint John’s first Epistle, Dr. Hales has added the three following, which have not been noticed by any other biblical critic.

1. As the other apostles James, Jude, Paul, and Peter, had written Catholic Epistles to the Hebrew Christians especially; it is likely, that one of the principal “*pillars of the church,*” the greatest surety of the mother church, the most highly gifted and illuminated of all the apostles of the circumcision, and the beloved disciple, would not be deficient likewise in this labour of love.

2. Nothing could tend so strongly to establish the faith of the early Jewish converts as the remarkable circumstances of our Lord’s crucifixion, exhibiting the accomplishment of the antient types and prophecies of the Old Testament respecting Christ’s passion, or sufferings in the flesh. These John alone could record, as he was the only eye-witness of that last solemn scene among the apostles. To these, therefore, he alludes in the exordium, as well as to the circumstances of our Lord’s appearances after the resurrection; and to these he again recalls their attention in that remarkable reference to “*the water*” at his baptism; to “*the water and blood*” at his passion, and to the dismissal of “*his spirit,*” when he commended it to His Father, and expired (v. 5—9).

3. The parallel testimony in the Gospel (John xix. 35—37) bears witness also to the priority of the Epistle, in the expression, “*He that saw hath testified*” (μεμαρτυρηκε), intimating that

he had delivered this testimony to the world already; for if *now*, for the first time, it should rather be expressed by the present tense, μαρτυρεῖ, "*testifieth*." And this is strongly confirmed by the apostle's same expression, after giving his evidence in the Epistle, "This is the *testimony of God, which He hath testified* (μεμαρτυρηκε) concerning his Son" (ver. 9), referring to the past transaction, as fulfilling prophecy*.

We conclude, therefore, that Saint John wrote his first Epistle in 68, or at the latest in 69; though it is impossible to ascertain from what place he sent it, whether from Patmos, as Grotius supposes, or from some city in Judea, as Dr. Macknight supposes, or at Ephesus, as Irenæus and Eusebius relate from antient tradition which has been generally received.

III. It is still more difficult to decide concerning the persons to whom this Epistle was written. Augustine, Cassiodorus, and the venerable Bede, called it the Epistle of Saint John to the Parthians, because the apostle is reported to have preached the Gospel to that people; but this opinion is entirely unsupported by the evidence of antiquity. Dr. Benson thinks that the Epistle was addressed to the Jewish Christians in Judea and Galilee. But the most probable opinion is that of Œcumenius, Lampe, Dupin, Lardner, Michaelis, Macknight, Bishop Tomline, and others, who think it was written for the use of Christians of every denomination, and of every country. For, 1. It has always been called a *catholic* or general Epistle; — 2. It does not contain any words of limitation that can restrict it to a particular people; — 3. The admonition in 1 John ii. 15. would be unnecessary to believers in Judea A. D. 68, after the war had commenced with the Romans; it is rather suited to people in easy circumstances, and who were in danger of being ensnared by the allurements of prosperity; — 4. Lastly, the concluding exhortation to believers to 'keep themselves from idols' is in no respect suitable to believers in Judea, but is much more likely to be addressed to Christians living in other parts of the world, where idolatry prevailed.

IV. This book is usually entitled *The General Epistle of Saint John*. "But in the composition of it, narrowly inspected, nothing is to be found of the epistolary form. It is not inscribed either to any individual, like Saint Paul's to Timothy

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 587—589; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 426—428. Lampe, tom. i. p. 106. Pritius, p. 106. Benson's Paraphrase on the Catholic Epistles, pp. 505—510. Macknight's Preface to 1 John, sect. 4.

and Titus, or the second of the two which follow it, ‘to the well-beloved Gaius’ — nor to any particular church, like Saint Paul’s to the churches of Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, and others — nor to the faithful of any particular region, like Saint Peter’s first Epistle ‘to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia’ — nor to any principal branch of the Christian church, like Saint Paul’s to the Hebrews — nor to the Christian church in general, like the second of Saint Peter’s, ‘to them that had obtained like precious faith with him,’ and like Saint Jude’s ‘to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.’ It bears no such inscription: it begins without salutation, and ends without benediction. It is true, the writer sometimes speaks, but without naming himself in the first person — and addresses his reader without naming him in the second. But this colloquial style is very common in all writings of a plain familiar cast: instances of it occur in Saint John’s Gospel: and it is by no means a distinguishing character of epistolary composition. It should seem that this book hath for no other reason acquired the title of an epistle, but that in the first formation of the canon of the New Testament it was put into the same volume with the didactic writings of the apostles, which, with this single exception, are all in the epistolary form. It is indeed a didactic discourse upon the principles of Christianity, both in doctrine and practice: and whether we consider the sublimity of its opening with the fundamental topics of God’s perfections, man’s depravity, and Christ’s propitiation — the perspicuity with which it propounds the deepest mysteries of our holy faith, and the evidence of the proof which it brings to confirm them; whether we consider the sanctity of its precepts, and the energy of argument with which they are persuaded and enforced — the dignified simplicity of language in which both doctrine and precept are delivered; whether we regard the importance of the matter, the propriety of the style, or the general spirit of ardent piety and warm benevolence, united with a fervid zeal, which breathes throughout the whole composition — we shall find it in every respect worthy of the holy author to whom the constant tradition of the church ascribes it, ‘the disciple whom Jesus loved’ *.”

* Bishop Horsley’s Sermons, pp. 144, 145. 2d edit.

The design of this treatise is to promote brotherly love, which the apostle enforces upon the best principles, and with the strongest arguments, derived from the love of God and of Christ, showing the utter insufficiency of faith and the external profession of religion without the evidence of a holy life and conduct; and also to guard and arm the Christians to whom he wrote, against erroneous and licentious tenets, principles, and practices; such as the denial of the real deity and proper humanity of Christ, the reality and efficacy of his sufferings and death as an atoning sacrifice, and the assertion, that believers, being saved by grace, were not required to obey the commandments of God. These principles began to appear in the church of Christ even in the apostolic age, and were afterwards maintained by the Cerinthians and other heretics who sprang up at the close of the first and in the second century of the Christian æra*.

V. Heidegger, Van Til, Pritius, Moldenhawer, Langius, and other analysts of Scripture, have each suggested different tabular synopses of this Epistle, with a view to illustrate its divisions, and to show the bearings of the apostle's arguments. Extreme prolixity and extreme brevity characterize their respective schemes. The following synopsis, however, it is hoped, will be found to show the leading divisions of the Epistle or treatise with sufficient perspicuity and conciseness. It consists of six sections, besides the conclusion, which is a recapitulation of the whole.

SECTION 1. asserts the true divinity and humanity of Christ, in opposition to the false teachers, and urges the union of faith and holiness of life as absolutely necessary to enable Christians to enjoy communion with God (i. 1—7).

SECTION 2. shows that all have sinned, and explains the doctrine of Christ's propitiation (i. 8—10. ii. 1—2). Whence the apostle takes occasion to illustrate the marks of true faith, viz. Obeying his commandments, and sincere love of the brethren, and shows that the love of the world is inconsistent with the love of God (ii. 3—17).

SECTION 3. asserts Jesus to be the same person with Christ, in opposition to the false teachers who denied it (ii. 18—29).

SECTION 4. On the privileges of true believers, and their consequent happiness and duties, and the marks by which they are known to be "the sons of God" (iii).

* For an ample account of the above-noticed heresies, see Macknight's Preface to 1 John, sect. 3. Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 401—412. *Buddæi Ecclesia Apostolica*, pp. 551, *et seq.*

SECTION 5. contains criteria by which to distinguish Antichrist and false Christians, with an exhortation to brotherly love (iv).

i. A mark to know one sort of Antichrist,—the not confessing that Christ came in the flesh (iv. 1—3).

ii. Criteria for distinguishing false Christians, viz.

(1). Love of the world (4—6).

(2). Want of brotherly love (7—12).

(3). Denying Christ to be the true Son of God (13—15).

ii. A recommendation of brotherly love, from the consideration of the love of God in giving his Son for sinners (16—21).

SECTION 6. shows the connexion between faith in Christ, regeneration, love to God and his children, obedience to his commandments, and victory over the world; and that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God, able to save us, and to hear the prayers we make for ourselves and others (v. 1—16).

The conclusion, which is a summary of the preceding treatise, shows that a sinful life is inconsistent with true Christianity; asserts the divinity of Christ; and cautions believers against idolatry (v. 17—21).

The style of this Epistle is pure, clear, and flowing; and an authoritative yet affectionate spirit pervades the whole, except in those passages where the apostle exposes and reprehends hypocrites and false teachers, whose dangerous practices and tenets he exposes in such a faithful, plain, and even authoritative manner, as may serve to illustrate the reason why our Saviour gave him, together with his brother James, the appellation of *Boanerges*, or sons of thunder (Mark iii. 17).

VI. Before we conclude this section, it may be proper to notice the controversy respecting the clause in 1 John v. 7, 8. concerning the *Heavenly Witnesses*, which has for nearly four centuries divided the opinions of learned men, and which is even yet undecided, though the majority of biblical critics now abandon it as spurious. As the limits assigned to this discussion are necessarily confined, we shall briefly state the evidence for and against its genuineness, and shall refer to those authors who have treated the question at large.

In the *Textus Receptus*, or received Greek Text of the New Testament, the seventh and eighth verses of the fifth chapter of this Epistle are as follow:

Ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες [ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἓν εἰσι. Καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ] τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσι.

In the Vulgate Latin, and our authentic English version, they run thus:

Quoniam qui tres sunt qui testimonium dant [in cœlo: Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus: et hi tres unum sunt. Et tres sunt, qui testimonium dant in terra:] spiritus, et aqua, et sanguis: et hi tres in unum sunt.

For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth,] the spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one.

The disputed passage is included between the brackets.

The decision of the controversy depends partly upon the Greek manuscripts, partly upon the antient versions, and partly upon the quotations which occur in the writings of the antient fathers.

AGAINST THE GENUINENESS OF THE CONTROVERTED PASSAGE, IT IS URGED,

1. *That this clause is not to be found in a single Greek manuscript written before the sixteenth century.*

Of all the manuscripts hitherto discovered and collated which contain this Epistle, amounting to upwards of *one hundred and forty-two*, three only have the text, and two of these are of no authority, viz. 1. The *Codex Guelpherbytanus*, which is evidently a manuscript of the seventeenth century, for it contains the Latin translation of Beza, written by the same hand, and consequently is of no use whatever in sacred criticisms. 2. The *Codex Ravianus* or *Berolinensis*, which is obviously a forgery; it is for the most part only a transcript of the Greek text in the Complutensian Polyglott, printed in 1514, with some various readings from Stephens's third edition; and the remainder (from Mark v. 20. to the end of Saint John's Gospel, and Rom. 1—vi. and xiii—16.) is a copy of the same edition, with some various readings taken partly from Stephens's Margin, and partly from the Complutensian Polyglott*. 3. The *Codex Britannicus*, as it was called by Erasmus, now better known by the appellation of the *Codex Montfortii* or *Dublinensis*, is preserved in Trinity College Library, Dublin†. It may be said to be the only *genuine* manuscript containing the disputed text. Michaelis assigns it to the sixteenth century; Dr. A. Clarke to the fourteenth, or even the thirteenth century. Conceding, however, every advantage that can be claimed for

* See this proved in Griesbach's *Symbolæ Criticæ*, pars i. p. clxxxi. and especially in Pappelbaum's *Codicis Manuscripti Raviani Examen*, 8vo, Berlin, 1796.

† See a fac-simile of this manuscript, *infra*, in the Appendix, No. IV. Sect. II.

this manuscript, it is still *modern*: and the testimony of a single witness, and that of so exceptionable an internal character, can be of no value in opposition to all other evidence.

2. *Though the clause in question is contained in the common printed editions of the Greek Testament, it was NOT INSERTED on the authority of any Greek manuscripts*: for the editors of the Complutensian Polyglott translated it from Latin into Greek; and from the Complutensian it was transferred to the other editions of the Greek Testament*.

3. *It is contained in no other antient version besides the Latin.*

It is wanting in both the Syriac versions †, in the Arabic, Coptic, Sahidic, Ethiopic, Armenian, and Sclavonic versions. It is true that in modern times the passage has been interpolated in the two last mentioned versions; but in the former it was not interpolated before the fourteenth, and in the latter not before the seventeenth century.

4. *Not all the manuscripts even of the Latin version contain this clause.*

It is wanting in upwards of forty of the oldest Latin manuscripts; in others it is found only in the margin, evidently inserted by a later hand; and, even in those manuscripts which do contain it, this passage is variously placed, sometimes before and sometimes after the earthly witnesses.

5. *The Greek fathers HAVE NEVER quoted the clause, not even in those places where we should most expect it.*

This has been ascertained after repeated and most minute examinations of the writings of the Greek fathers, who have frequently cited the preceding verse, as well as that which immediately follows. Now, that they should not avail themselves of so strong and apposite a text in their controversies with the Arians and other sectaries, as an additional confirmation of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, is utterly inexplicable, on any other supposition than that of its not being in existence.

FOR THE GENUINENESS OF THE CONTROVERTED CLAUSE,
IT IS CONTENDED,

1. *That it is found in most Latin manuscripts.*

* The disputed clause is *not* printed in Erasmus's first and second editions, nor in those of Aldus, Cephalæus, Colinaeus, Macey (in Greek and English), Dr. Harwood (whose edition of the Epistles represents the Clermont manuscript) Matthæi, and Griesbach: and in the editions of Bowyer and Knappe it is included between brackets. It may be proper to remark, that Erasmus inserted this clause in his third edition, on the faith of the Codex Britannicus above mentioned, not from any conviction of its genuineness, but, as he says, 'to avoid calumny.'

† We are informed by Dr. Buchanan that it is not to be found in a Peschito or Syriac manuscript which has belonged to the Syrian church in India above a thousand years, nor in any copy of the Syriac Scriptures which he had seen. *Christ. Researches in Asia*, p. 118. This manuscript is now in the Public Library at Cambridge.

It is readily conceded that most of the Latin manuscripts now extant contain the disputed clause, but they are the least antient and most incorrect. It must also be recollected that no version has been so corrupted as the Latin*. The Latin transcribers took the most unwarrantable liberties, inserting in one book of the New Testament passages which they took from another, and frequently transferring into the text what they found written in the margin of the manuscript whence they copied. Under these circumstances, Michaelis concludes, every one must immediately suspect that a passage, which is wanting in all the antient Greek manuscripts, and is likewise wanting in many antient copies even of the Latin version, is an interpolation in those Latin manuscripts that contain it. And, in the present instance, the same cause which has procured so many zealous advocates in favour of 1 John v. 7, was the principal cause of its introduction and general reception, viz. the importance of the doctrine which it contains.

2. It is cited by numerous Latin fathers.

In reply to this argument, it is urged that their authority is inferior to that of the Greek fathers in determining the readings of the Greek manuscripts: for, in writing to the Latin churches, they usually refer to their own version of the Scriptures, and, like our divines, must be understood to quote the established translation, unless they give notice of the contrary: now, if the Latin fathers were unexceptionable witnesses, and if they had quoted in express terms the whole of the controverted passage, their quotations would prove nothing more than that the passage stood in their manuscripts of the Latin version, and consequently that the Latin version contained it in a very early age.

Of the Latin fathers, Tertullian in the second, and Cyprian in the third century, are chiefly relied on by the advocates for the genuineness of the verse: but it has been shown at great length by Dr. Benson, Michaelis, and Griesbach, that none of the passages supposed to be quoted by these writers refer to the seventh verse, but that they refer to the eighth verse, by mystically interpreting the spirit, the blood, and the water, mentioned in that verse, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and that Facundus, Eucherius, Fulgentius, Augustine, and others, were led into the same interpretation by the celebrity of Cyprian's name, who after his martyrdom became "the common master and oracle of the church." Much stress has been laid on the testimony of Vigilius bishop of Thapsus

* See an account of the Latin version and its alterations in Vol. I. pp. 292, 293, of this work.

at the close of the fifth century, who is the first person that seems to have referred expressly to the three heavenly witnesses: but his quotation does not agree with the present text, either in *words* or in *sense*. Vigilus, however, is a writer of very little credit, who imposed his sentiments upon the world under the names of Athanasius, Idacius, and others; and the passage, in which he is supposed to have referred to the disputed clause, is also suspected not to be genuine.

But the chief argument, arising from the quotations of the Latin fathers, is derived from the confession of faith drawn up by Eugenius bishop of Carthage at the end of the fifth century, and presented by the orthodox bishops of Africa to Hunneric king of the Vandals, who had been converted to Arianism. In this confession, which is recorded by Victor Vitensis *, is the following passage: *Ut adhuc luce clarius unius divinitatis esse cum Patre et Filio Spiritum Sanctum doceamus, Joannis Evangelistæ testimonio comprobatur. Ait namque, TRES SUNT, QUI TESTIMONIUM PERHIBENT IN CÆLO, PATER, VERBUM, ET SPIRITUS SANCTUS, ET HI TRES UNUM SUNT.* In English thus:—"That it may appear more clear than the light, that the divinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one, see it proved by the evangelist Saint John, who writes as follows: THERE ARE THREE WHICH BEAR RECORD IN HEAVEN, THE FATHER, THE WORD, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND THESE THREE ARE ONE."

In this passage of the confession of the African bishops, 1 John v. 7. is clearly and distinctly quoted; but this, Michaelis remarks, proves nothing in respect of its authenticity; for the only inference which we can deduce is, that the passage was contained in the Latin manuscripts then used in Africa. "We may infer that Eugenius, who drew up the confession, found the passage in his Latin manuscript; but that all the bishops who signed this confession found the quoted passage likewise in their manuscripts, is a very unwarrantable inference. For when a formulary of religious articles is composed, however numerous the persons may be who set their names to it, it is in fact the work only of him who drew it up: and a subscription to such a formulary, though it conveys a general assent to the doctrines contained in it, by no means implies that every subscriber has, previous to his subscription, examined every argument adduced, or every quotation that is alleged in it, and

* Historia Persecutionis Vandalicæ, p. 29. edit. Ruinart. Mr. Travis has related the history of this transaction in his "Letters to Edward Gibbon, Esq." pp. 57—60; and has given the confession itself in his Appendix, No. xxxi. pp. 31, et seq.

obtained a thorough conviction that not one of them is exceptionable.

“But it is said, the Arians themselves, who were present when this confession was delivered, made no objection to the quotation, ‘*Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in cælo, &c.*’ that they acknowledged therefore by their very silence, that the passage was not spurious. Now this is a very weak and even absurd argument. For, in the first place, we have no further knowledge of this transaction, than what the orthodox themselves have given of it: and therefore it is not fair to conclude, that the Arians made no objections, merely from the circumstance that no objections are on record. Secondly, if the conclusion were admissible, nay, were it absolutely certain that the Arians, who were present at this conference, admitted, ‘*Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in cælo, &c.*’ it would follow only that the passage was in their Latin manuscripts, as the quotation of it shows that it was in the Latin manuscript of Eugenius, who drew up the confession. For these Arians were Vandals who had been driven out of Spain into Africa, who read the Bible only in the Latin translation, and were totally unacquainted with Greek. Consequently their silence on the quotation of a passage from the Latin translation, at the end of the fifth century, affords no presumption whatsoever that the passage existed in the Greek original. Lastly, the whole transaction between Hunneric with his Arian Vandals, on the one side, and the orthodox bishops of Africa on the other, was of such a nature as was very ill adapted to the decision of a critical question. For these Vandals did not combat by argument, but by force; and they brought their adversaries to silence, not by reasoning with them, but by cutting out their tongues. To argue therefore from the silence of such men to the authenticity of 1 John v. 7. is nearly the same as an appeal in its favour to the testimony of a Russian corporal*.”

Conclusive as we think this reasoning of Michaelis, an eminently learned Roman Catholic layman †, who is disposed to give it all the weight which it justly demands, has endeavoured to support the argument deducible from the narrative in favour of the authenticity of the verse, by the following considerations. “1st. The Catholic bishops were summoned to a conference; so that they expected (and it certainly was highly probable,) that their tenets, and the proofs they should adduce of them, would be strongly attacked: — 2d. This circumstance must have made them very cautious of what they inserted in their proposed

* Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 427, 428.

† Charles Butler, Esq. See his *Horæ Biblicæ*, vol. ii. pp. 292—295. 2d edit.

confession:—3d. Particularly, as all power was in the hands of their angry and watchful adversaries:—4th. Of course, though they might, and from the nature of the case, must have inserted in the confession, some things, at which they knew the Arians would cavil, they would not have inserted in it any thing, which, by merely asking a plain question, the Arian could prove to be a palpable falsehood:—5th. Now, if the Arians could, with truth, have said to the Catholic bishops, what the present opposers of the verse say—The verse is in no Greek copy; it is in no antient Latin copy; it is in no antient father; it is in few only of your own copies:—Can you even assert the contrary? What could the Catholic bishops have replied? If we are to believe the adversaries of the verse, the bishops could hold out no Greek copy; no antient Latin copy; no antient father, where the verse was to be found:—6th. On this supposition, therefore, instantly and on the very spot, the Arians could have shown the spuriousness of the verse, and have convicted the bishops of a palpable falsehood:—7th. And this, at a time and in a situation, when the eyes of all the Christian world were upon them:—8th. Now, is it probable the Catholic bishops would have exposed themselves to such immediate and indelible infamy?—9th. Particularly, as it was volunteering it: for their producing the verse was a mere voluntary act: their cause did not depend on it; long treatises had been written by the antient defenders of the Trinity, in which the verse had not been mentioned:—10th. Consequently, when the Catholic bishops produced the verse, they could have no fear that any such proof positive of its spuriousness could be dashed upon them:—11th. Therefore, they knew, either that the verse could not be attacked; or that, if attacked, they could produce Greek copies, antient Latin copies, and antient fathers in its defence:—12th. It is observable that the greatest part of the Catholic prelates who assisted at this conference, suffered, for their steady adherence to their faith, the severest persecution. In the language of Mr. Gibbon (ch. 38), “Three hundred and two of them were banished to different parts of Africa, exposed to the insults of their enemies, and carefully deprived of all the temporal and spiritual comforts of life. Gundamund, the nephew and immediate successor of Hunneric, appeared to emulate and even to surpass the cruelty of his uncle. At length he relented and recalled the bishops. Thrasimund, his brother and immediate successor, prohibited by law any episcopal ordination; and their disobedience was punished by a second exile of two hundred and twenty bishops into Sardinia, where they languished fifteen years.” Surely it is improbable, that men who could un-

dergo such persecutions and sufferings for their belief of the consubstantiality of the Son, would introduce a spurious verse into His Word."

These arguments Mr. Butler considers to be in favour of the authenticity of the verse. The praise of ingenuity it is impossible to withhold from them; and if the historian from whose expressions he has deduced them had been a writer of unimpeachable veracity, they would go far towards deciding the controversy. But, unhappily for the testimony of Victor Vitensis, that historian has not only rendered his credit extremely suspicious by his account of the Vandalic persecution; but he has also excited the sneers of infidelity by recording some ridiculous miracles, the truth of which, notwithstanding, he solemnly pledged himself to prove*.

It appears, then, that the weight of *external* evidence is decidedly against the genuineness of the contested clause. It remains therefore briefly to notice the internal arguments adduced in its behalf.

1. It is contended that the connexion of the disputed clause requires it to be inserted, in order to complete the sense; while those who reject it affirm that its insertion injures the whole passage. Bishop Horsley, Dr. Macknight, Mr. Valpy, and Mr. Scott have both given explications, which show that the verse, if properly interpreted, instead of disturbing the sense of the verses with which it is joined, rather renders it more connected and complete†.

2. At the seventh verse, the three that bear record are manifestly persons, and the words that express two of them are masculine nouns, ὁ Πατήρ (*the Father*), and ὁ Λόγος (*the Word*); whence we may naturally expect that the adjuncts, or adjectives which allude to them, would all be of the masculine gender likewise: consequently we find the heavenly witnesses to be denoted by the words τρεῖς εἰσὶν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες (*there are three that bear record*). Thus far, all is conformable to the rules of plain grammar. Besides, it cannot be difficult to conceive that the sacred writer, when about to express the earthly witnesses in the next verse, might carry on the same expression or adjuncts to that verse; and the correspondence in the number of witnesses, and the similarity of their design in bearing witness to the truth of the religion of Christ, may tend to confirm this

* See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi. pp. 283—295, 8vo edit.

† Bishop Horsley's *Sermons*, pp. 158, *et seq.* 2d edit. The passage is also extracted in Mr. Hewlett's and Messrs. D'Oyly's and Mant's *Commentaries* on 1 John v. 7. See likewise Macknight and Scott *in loc.* and Mr. Valpy's *Nov. Test. cum Scholiis*, vol. iii. pp. 579, 580.

sentiment. But if the former verse did not precede, and should be rejected as spurious, it will be difficult to account for the use of the masculine gender; and we should rather be inclined to suspect that the words would have been τρία εἰς τα μαρτυρητά, as all the terms that follow to denote the earthly energies, or attestations, are every one of the neuter gender. It appears then that the turn of the language, as well as the nature of the witnesses, would require the use of this gender; and therefore the accuracy of the construction, or the strict rules of grammar, must favour the present text*.

3. Bishop Middleton has a long and elaborate dissertation, the design of which is to show that the article *TO* before *EV* εἰς in the eighth verse, must necessarily refer to the word *EN* in the preceding verse, and consequently that *both* verses must be retained, or *both* rejected. The argument is not of a nature to admit of abridgment, but it is too important not to be noticed in this place†.

4. Further, those critics who advocate the genuineness of this text, endeavour to account for its omission by the following causes:

(1). The seventh verse begins and ends in the same manner as the eighth, and therefore the transcribers might easily have overlooked the seventh verse, and consequently have omitted it by mere accident.

(2). The Arians might have designedly expunged it, as being inimical to their doctrine.

(3). The orthodox themselves might have designedly withdrawn it out of regard to the mystery of the Trinity, under the persuasion that such a passage as 1 John v. 7. ought not to be exposed to every reader.

Without examining the strength or weakness of these reasons, Michaelis observes, “that such causes, though they might have produced the omission of the passage in some copies, could not possibly have occasioned it in all the antient Greek manuscripts, and in all the antient versions, except the Latin. Besides, they are wholly foreign to the present purpose: they do not tend to show the authenticity of 1 John v. 7. but account merely for its omission, on the previous supposition, that it is authentic. But this is the thing to be proved. And it is surely absurd to account for the omission of a passage in Saint John’s first Epistle before it has been shown that the Epistle ever con-

* Classical Journal, vol. ii. pp. 869—871.

† See Bishop Middleton on the Greek Article, pp. 633—653.

tained it. Suppose," he continues, "I were to cite a man before a court of justice, and demand from him a sum of money, that on being asked by the magistrate, whether I had any bond to produce in support of the demand, I answered, that I had indeed no bond to produce, but that a bond might have been very easily lost during the troubles of the late war. In this case, if the magistrate should admit the validity of the demand, and oblige the accused party to pay the sum required, every man would conclude, not so much that he was unjust, as that his mental faculties were deranged. But is not this case similar to the case of those who contend that 1 John v. 7. is genuine, because it might have been lost? In fact, their situation is still worse, since the loss of a single manuscript is much more credible than the loss of one and the same passage in more than eighty manuscripts *."

Upon a review of all the preceding considerations we may remark, that, though the weight of external evidence is decidedly against the genuineness of the clause in question, yet there are some circumstances in the internal arguments for it, particularly the second and third, that seem much in its favour. And, upon the whole, we cannot help entertaining a suspicion with the learned prelate above named, that though so much labour and critical acuteness have been bestowed on these celebrated verses, more is yet to be done before the mystery in which they are involved can be wholly developed; especially as another eminent critic has remarked, if it should happen that still older manuscripts should yet be found than those on which we are now obliged to rely †.

We have thus briefly placed before the reader the principal arguments that have been adduced on the present very important question. Should it *ultimately* appear that the disputed clause is spurious, its absence will not diminish the weight of irresistible evidence which other undisputed passages of holy writ afford to the doctrine of the Trinity ‡. "The proofs of our Lord's true and proper Godhead remain *unshaken*—deduced from the prophetic descriptions of the Messiah's person in the Old Testament—from the ascription to him of the attributes, the works, and the homage, which are peculiar to the Deity—and from those numerous and important relations, which

* Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 434.

† Bishop Middleton on the Greek Article, p. 653. British Critic, vol. xxxvii. (O. S.) p. 387.

‡ See this fully proved by the late Rev. W. Jones (of Nayland) in his well-known "Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity."

he is affirmed in Scripture to sustain towards his holy and universal church, and towards each of its true members *."

The reader, who may be desirous of entering more fully into this controversy, may consult the dissertation of Dr. Benson †, the elaborate note or rather disquisition of Wetstein ‡, and particularly the dissertation of Michaelis already cited §, together with Mr. Archdeacon Travis's Letters to Edward Gibbon, Esq. (8vo, 1794, 3d. edit.), the late Professor Porson's Letters to Mr. Travis, in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1788, 1789, and 1790, which were soon afterwards collected into an octavo volume, and published with additions, and also the Rev. Herbert (now Bishop) Marsh's Letters to Mr. Archdeacon Travis, (8vo, Leipsic and London, 1795). Those, who may not have the opportunity of consulting these rare and elaborate works, will find a copious and perspicuous account of the controversy in the *Diatribes* of Griesbach, at the end of the second volume of his edition of the Greek Testament, as well as in the sixth volume of the Christian Observer, for the year 1806; and a neat and succinct statement of the arguments in Dr. A. Clarke's Succession of Sacred Literature ||, and also in the second volume of Mr. Butler's *Horæ Biblicæ* **. The dissertation of the late Rev. Dr. Hey, though less extensive than either of the last-mentioned disquisitions, is richly deserving of a perusal from the candid spirit in which it is drawn up ††.

* Eclectic Review, vol. v. part i. p. 249.

† Paraphrase on the Catholic Epistles, pp. 631—646.

‡ Nov. Test. vol. ii. pp. 721—726.

§ See his Introd. to the New Test. vol. iv. pp. 412—441.

|| Pp. 85—98. Dr. C. has reprinted his Essay, with important additions, at the end of his Commentary on the First Epistle of Saint John.

** Mr. Butler's work is particularly valuable, as he has given the *literary history* of this controversy, which want of room has compelled us to omit.

†† See his *Norrisian Lectures on Divinity*, vol. ii. pp. 280—291.

SECTION VI.

ON THE SECOND AND THIRD EPISTLES OF JOHN.

- I. *Genuineness, authenticity, and date of these Epistles*; — II. *The second Epistle to whom addressed*; — III. *Its scope*; — IV. *The third Epistle to whom addressed*; — V. *Its scope*; — VI. *Observations on this Epistle*.

I. **ALTHOUGH**, in the fourth century, when Eusebius wrote his ecclesiastical history, these two Epistles were classed among the *Αντιλεγομένα* or books which were received by the ma-

jority of Christians, though some doubts were entertained by others respecting their authenticity; yet testimonies are not wanting, to prove that they were both known and received as genuine productions of the apostle Saint John. The second Epistle is cited by Irenæus, and received by Clement of Alexandria. Origen mentions all three Epistles, though he says that the second and third were not allowed to be genuine by all persons. Dionysius of Alexandria mentions them as being ascribed to Saint John. The second Epistle was quoted by Alexander bishop of Alexandria; and all three Epistles were received by Athanasius, by Cyril of Jerusalem, by Epiphanius, Jerome (a few of whose contemporaries doubted the authenticity of these Epistles), Rufinus, and almost every subsequent writer of note *. They are not indeed received in the Syrian churches; but the thoughts and style are so similar to those of the first Epistle †, that almost all critics attribute them to the author of the first Epistle, namely, Saint John; and they were in all probability written about the same time as that Epistle, viz. A. D. 68 or 69. Consequently these Epistles could not have been written by John the elder, a member of the Ephesian church as some of the fathers, and also some modern critics, have imagined. Various reasons have been assigned why these two Epistles were not received earlier into the canon. Michaelis is disposed to think that doubt was excited concerning their genuineness by the address, in which the author neither calls himself John, nor assumes the title of an apostle, but simply names himself the “elder” (ὁ πρεσβύτερος); as Saint Peter (1 ch. v. 1.) styles himself a “fellow-elder” (συνπρεσβύτερος), which title, after Peter’s death, the apostle John might with great propriety assume, as being the only remaining apostle. It is however most probable, that, being letters to private persons, they had for a considerable time been kept in the possession of the families to whom they were originally sent, and were not discovered till long after the apostle’s decease, and after the death of the persons to whom they had been addressed. When first discovered, all the immediate vouchers for their genuineness were necessarily gone; and the church of Christ, ever on its guard against imposture, particularly in relation to writings professing to be the work of apostles, hesitated to receive them into the number of canonical Scriptures, until it was fully ascertained that they were divinely inspired.

* See the references to the above-named fathers in Dr. Lardner’s Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 584—586; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 525, 526.

† Dr. Mill, and after him Dr. Lardner, observe, that, of the thirteen verses composing the second Epistle, eight are to be found in the first, either in sense or in expression.

II. Considerable uncertainty prevails respecting the person to whom the second Epistle was addressed, some conjecturing a particular person to be intended, while others understand it figuratively, as of the church. The antient commentators supposed it to be figurative, but most of the modern commentators and critics understand it literally, though they do not agree in their literal interpretation. Archbishop Newcome, Wakefield, Macknight, and the venerable translators of our authorized version, make *εκλεκτῇ* to be an adjective, and render the inscription “to the elect (or excellent, or chosen) Lady;” the Vulgate version, Calmet and others consider *εκλεκτῇ* to be a proper name, and translate it, “To the Lady Electa;” Schleusner and Rosenmüller take *Κυρια* to be a proper name, and the Epistle be addressed to Cyria the Elect, and Michaelis conjectures *Κυρια* to be an ellipsis of *Κυρια Εκκλησια*, which, among the antient Greeks, signified an assembly of the people held at a stated time, and was held at Athens three times in every month; and that, since the sacred writers adopted the term *Εκκλησια* from its civil use among the Greeks, *Κυρια Εκκλησια* might here mean the stated assembly of the Christians, held every Sunday; and thus *τῇ εκλεκτῇ κυρια*, with *εκκλησια* understood, would signify ‘To the elect church or community which comes together on Sundays.’ He admits, however, that he knows not of any instance of such ellipsis; and Bishop Middleton does not think that this explanation can be very easily established. Of these various hypotheses, the most probable opinion is that which considers the Epistle as addressed to the *Lady Electa*, who is supposed to have been an eminent Christian matron: what confirms this opinion is, that the Greek article is absent, which would have been absolutely necessary if the inscription had been “To the elect Lady,” or to “Kyria the Elect.”

III. THE SECOND EPISTLE OF Saint John is an epitome of the first, and touches, in few words, on the same points. The “Lady Electa” is commended for her virtuous and religious education of her children; and is exhorted to abide in the doctrine of Christ, to persevere in the truth, and carefully to avoid the delusions of false teachers. But chiefly the apostle beseeches this Christian matron to practise the great and indispensable commandment of Christian love and charity.

IV. The THIRD EPISTLE of Saint John is addressed to a converted Gentile, a respectable member of some Christian church, called Gaius or Caius; but, who he was, is extremely uncertain, as there are three persons of this name mentioned in the New Testament; viz. 1. Gaius of Corinth (1 Cor. i. 14), whom Saint Paul calls his “host, and the host of the whole church” (Rom. xvi. 23); 2. Gaius, a native of Macedonia,

who accompanied Saint Paul, and spent some time with him at Ephesus (Acts xix. 29); 3. Gaius of Derbe (Acts xx. 4), who also was a fellow-traveller of Saint Paul. Michaelis and most modern critics suppose the person to whom this Epistle was addressed to be the Gaius of Corinth, as hospitality was a leading feature in his character. His hospitable temper, particularly towards the ministers of the Gospel is strongly marked in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth verses of this Epistle.

V. The scope of this Epistle is to commend his steadfastness in the faith, and his general hospitality, especially to the ministers of Christ; to caution him against the ambitious and turbulent practices of Diotrophes, and to recommend Demetrius to his friendship; referring what he further had to say to a personal interview.

VI. Commentators are by no means agreed who this Diotrophes was. Bede, Erasmus, Michaelis, and others, suppose him to have been the author of a new sect, and that, as he delivered false doctrines, he objected to those who propagated the true faith. Grotius, Le Clerc, and Beausobre imagined that he was a Gentile convert who would not receive Jewish Christians. But it is most probable that he was an ambitious elder or bishop in the church of which Gaius was a member, and that, having been converted from Judaism, he opposed the admission of the Gentiles, and set himself up as the head of a party in opposition to the apostles. If (as we suppose) the Gaius to whom this Epistle was addressed was the generous "host of the church at Corinth," it is possible that this Diotrophes might have been the leading opponent of Saint Paul in that city, whom he forebore to name out of delicacy, though he censured his conduct. See 1 Cor. iii. 3—5. iv. 6, &c.

Demetrius, who is so highly commended by the apostle in this Epistle, is thought to have held some sacred office in the church of which Gaius was a member; but this opinion is rejected by Dr. Benson, because on that supposition Gaius must have known him so well, as to need no information concerning his character from the apostle. He therefore believed him to have been the bearer of this letter, and one of the brethren who went forth to preach to the Gentiles. With this conjecture Rosenmüller coincides. Calmet supposes that he was a member of the same church as Gaius, whose piety and hospitality he imitated. But whoever Demetrius was, his character and deportment were the reverse of the character and conduct of Diotrophes: for the apostle speaks of the former as having a good testimony from all men, and whose temper and behaviour were in every respect conformable to the precepts of the Gospel,

and therefore Saint John recommends him as an example to Gaius, and the other members of the church to which he belonged.

* Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 442—456. Lardner, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 584—607; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 425—437. Benson on the Catholic Epistles, pp. 663—680. Buddei, Ecclesia Apostolica, pp. 314—316. Dr. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book ii. pp. 1150—1152. Bishop Middleton on the Greek Article, pp. 653—656. Lampe, in Evang. Joannis, tom. i. pp. 111—115.

SECTION VI.

ON THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE.

I. *Account of the author*;—II. *Genuineness and authenticity*;—
III. *Date*;—IV. *Of the persons to whom this Epistle was addressed*;—V. *Its occasion and scope*;—VI. *Observations on its style*.

I. **JUDE** or Judas, who was surnamed Thaddeus and Leb-beus, and was also called the brother of our Lord (Matt. xiii. 55), was the son of Alpheus, brother of James the Less, and one of the twelve apostles. We are not informed when or how he was called to the apostleship; and there is scarcely any mention of him in the New Testament, except in the different catalogues of the twelve apostles. The only particular incident related concerning Jude is to be found in John xiv. 21—23; where we read that he addressed the following question to his divine Master—*Lord! how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?* Full of ideas of temporal grandeur and universal monarchy, he could not imagine how our Saviour could establish a kingdom without manifesting it to the world;—a proof how much this apostle was actuated by Jewish prejudices, and what delusive hopes he cherished, in common with all the other apostles, of soon beholding his Master erect a powerful and magnificent empire.

As Jude continued with the rest of the apostles after our Lord's resurrection and ascension (Acts i. 13), and was with them on the day of Pentecost (ii. 1), it is not unreasonable to suppose, that, after having received the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, he preached the Gospel for some time in Judea, and performed miracles in the name of Christ. And, as his life seems to have been prolonged, it is probable that he afterwards quitted Judea, and preached the Gospel to Jews

and Gentiles in other countries. It has been said, that he preached in Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia, and that he suffered martyrdom in the last-mentioned country. The Syrians still claim him as their apostle; but we have no account of his travels upon which we can rely, and it may even be questioned whether he was a martyr*.

II. In the early ages of Christianity, the Epistle of Jude was rejected by several persons, because the apocryphal books of Enoch, and of the ascension of Moses, were supposed to be quoted in it; and Michaelis has rejected it as spurious. We, have, however, the most satisfactory evidences of the authenticity of this Epistle. It is found in all the antient catalogues of the sacred writings of the New Testament: it is asserted to be genuine by Clement of Alexandria, and is quoted as Saint Jude's production by Tertullian, by Origen, and by the greater part of the antients noticed by Eusebius†. Independently of this external evidence, the genuineness of the Epistle of Saint Jude is confirmed by the subjects discussed in it, which are in every respect suitable to the character of an apostle of Jesus Christ: for the writer's design was, to characterize and condemn the false teachers who endeavoured in that age to make proselytes to their erroneous and dangerous tenets, to reprobate the impious doctrines which they taught for the sake of advantage, and to enforce the practice of holiness on all who professed the Gospel. In short, as Dr. Macknight most truly observes, there is no error taught, no evil practice enjoined, for the sake of which any impostor could be induced to impose a forgery of this kind upon the world.

With regard to the objection against the genuineness of this Epistle, which is derived from the supposed quotation by

* It is more certain that Jude was a married man, and had children: for Eusebius relates, on the authority of the ecclesiastical historian Hegesippus, (a converted Jew, who flourished in the second century), that the emperor Domitian, in a fit of jealousy, ordered inquiry to be made concerning the posterity of David, on which occasion some of the grandchildren of Jude were brought before him. The emperor, first asking them several questions respecting their profession and manner of life, which was husbandry, next inquired concerning the kingdom of Christ, and when it should appear? To this they replied, that it was a heavenly and spiritual, not a temporal kingdom; and that it would not be manifested till the end of the world. Domitian, thus finding that they were mean persons and perfectly harmless, dismissed them unbound, and by edict appeased the persecution which had been raised against the church. Hegesippus adds, that, on their release, the grandchildren of Jude afterwards presided over churches, both as being martyrs (more correctly confessors), and also as being allied to our Lord. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 19, 20.

† See the passages of the above-named writers in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 613—618; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 440—443.

Saint Jude of an apocryphal book of Enoch, Dr. Lardner has well replied, that there is no necessity for imagining that Saint Jude did cite a book called Enoch or Enoch's Prophecies. He only says, "*Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied concerning these men, saying, Behold the Lord cometh, &c.*" (verse 14). Besides, we have no evidence that there was any book extant in the time of Jude, entitled *Enoch*, or the *Prophecy of Enoch*. In the second and third centuries, indeed, a book with that title was in circulation among Christians; but it seems to have been forged on occasion of the mention of Enoch's prophecy in this Epistle, and it was universally rejected as a manifest forgery. Allowing, however, that there was such a book extant in the apostle's days, and that he did quote it, he gives it no authority; it was no canonical book of the Jews: and if such a book existed among them, it was apocryphal, and yet it might contain some things that were true.

Saint Jude's quoting from it the prophecy under consideration would not lessen the authority of his Epistle, any more than Saint Paul's quotations from the heathen poets, Aratus (Acts xvii. 28), Menander (1 Cor. xv. 33), and Epimenides (Tit. i. 12), have lessened the authority of the history of the Acts, and of that apostle's letters, where these quotations are found*. The reason is (as Macknight most forcibly observes), if the things contained in these quotations were true in themselves, they might be mentioned by an inspired writer without giving authority to the poems from which they were cited. In like manner, if the prophecy ascribed to Enoch, concerning the future judgment and punishment of the wicked, was agreeable to the other declarations of God respecting that event, Jude might cite it, because Enoch (who, like Noah, was a preacher of righteousness) might actually have delivered such a prophecy, though it is not recorded in the Old Testament; and because his quoting it did not establish the authority of the book whence he took it, if he took it from any book extant in his time.

The preceding observations apply with equal force to verse 9, in which the apostle is supposed to cite an apocryphal relation or tradition concerning the archangel Michael's disputing with Satan for the body of Moses. This is by some writers referred

* On the subject of these quotations from profane writers, see Vol. I. pp. 526, 527, *supra*.

to a book called the "Assumption or Ascension of Christ," which in all probability was a forgery much later than the time of Jude; but Dr. Lardner thinks it much more credible that the apostle alludes to the vision in Zech. iii. 1—3; and this opinion is adopted and elucidated by Dr. Macknight in his note on the verse in question. In further illustration of this verse, we may remark, that it was a Jewish maxim, that "it is not lawful for man to prefer ignominious reproaches, even against wicked spirits." Might not the apostle, then, have used it merely as a popular illustration (without vouching for the fact) of that sober and wholesome doctrine, *not to speak evil of dignities?* from the example of an archangel, who did not venture to rail even at Satan, but meekly said, "*The LORD rebuke thee!*"

III. The time and place when and where this Epistle was written, are extremely uncertain. Dr. Mill fixes its date to the year 90, principally because the false teachers, whom Saint Peter describes as *yet to come*, are mentioned by Jude as *already come*. But on a comparison of this Epistle with the second of Saint Peter, there does not appear to be such a remarkable difference in their phraseology, as will be sufficient to prove that Saint Jude wrote his Epistle so long after Saint Peter's second Epistle, as Dr. Mill supposed; though it proves, as most critics agree, that it was written *after* the latter. The very great coincidence in sentiment and style between these two Epistles renders it likely that they were written about the same time; and, since we have seen that the second Epistle of Saint Peter was in all probability written early in A. D. 65, we are induced with Lardner to place it towards the close of the same year, or perhaps in A. D. 66. Bishop Tomline, however, dates it in A. D. 70; Beausobre and L'Enfant, between A. D. 70 and 75; and Dodwell and Dr. Cave, in 71 or 72.

IV. There is much diversity of opinion concerning the persons to whom this Epistle was addressed. Estius and Witsius were of opinion that Saint Jude wrote to Christians every where, but especially to the converted Jews. Dr. Hammond thought that the Epistle was directed to Jewish Christians alone, and with the design of guarding them against the errors of the Gnostics. Dr. Benson also thought that it was written to Jewish believers, especially to those of the western dispersion. Moldenhawer was of opinion that it was inscribed to the eastern churches, among whom the apostle had probably

laboured. But, from the inscription *, Drs. Lardner and Macknight, Bishop Tomline and Dr. A. Clarke, concur in thinking that it was written to all, without distinction, who had embraced the Gospel. The only reason, Dr. Macknight remarks, which has induced commentators to suppose that Jude wrote to the Jewish believers alone, is, that he makes use of arguments and examples taken from the sacred books of the Jews. But Saint Paul, we have seen, followed the same course when writing to the Gentiles; and both apostles did so with propriety, not only because all who embraced the Gospel acknowledged the authority of the Jewish Scriptures, but also because it was of the greatest importance to make the Gentiles sensible that the Gospel was in perfect unison with the antient revelation.

V. The design of this Epistle is, to guard believers against the false teachers who had begun to insinuate themselves into the Christian church; and to contend with the utmost earnestness and zeal for the true faith, against the dangerous tenets which they disseminated, resolving the whole of Christianity into a speculative belief and outward profession of the Gospel. And having thus cancelled the obligations of morality and personal holiness, they taught their disciples to live in all manner of licentiousness, and at the same time flattered them with the hope of divine favour, and of obtaining eternal life. The vile characters of these seducers are further shown, and their sentence is denounced; and the Epistle concludes with warnings, admonitions, and counsels to believers, how to persevere in faith and godliness themselves, and to rescue others from the snares of the false teachers.

VI. There is very great similarity between the Epistle of Jude and the second chapter of Saint Peter's second Epistle, in subject, style, vehemence, and holy indignation against impudence and lewdness, against those who insidiously undermine chastity, purity, and sound principles. The expressions are remarkably strong, the language is animated, and the figures and comparisons are bold, apt, and striking. In the Epistle of Jude, particularly, there is an energy, a force, a grandeur of expression and style—an apparent labour for words and images, expressive enough to give the reader a just and adequate idea of the profligate characters he exposes; and the

* To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.....Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the COMMON salvation, &c. Jude 1. 3.

and the whole is admirably calculated to show how deeply the holy apostle was grieved at the scandalous immoralities of those who called themselves Christians, and with what fervour and courage he tore off the mask from these hypocrites, that the church and the world might see all the turpitude and deformity that lurked beneath it *.

* Benson on the Catholic Epistles, pp. 437—448. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 619—627: 4to, vol. iii. pp. 443—447. Macknight's Preface to Jude. Blackwell's Sacred Classics, vol. i. pp. 304, 305.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE REVELATION OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE.

- I. *The genuineness of this book shown, 1. From external evidence; 2. From internal characters; — III. Its date; — IV. Occasion and scope; — V. Synopsis of its contents; — VI. Observations on this book.*

I. **IT** is a remarkable circumstance, that the authenticity of this book was very generally, if not universally, acknowledged during the two first centuries, and yet in the third century it began to be questioned. This seems to have been occasioned by *some* absurd notions concerning the Millenium, which a few well-meaning but fanciful expositors grounded on this book; which notions their opponents injudiciously and presumptuously endeavoured to discredit, by denying the authority of the book itself. So little, however, has this portion of holy writ suffered from the ordeal of criticism to which it has in consequence been subjected, that (as Sir Isaac Newton has long since remarked) there is no other book of the New Testament so strongly attested, or commented upon so early, as the Apocalypse. And Dr. Priestley (no mean judge of biblical questions where his peculiar creed was not concerned) has declared, that he thinks it impossible for any intelligent and candid person to peruse it without being struck, in the most forcible manner, with the peculiar dignity and sublimity of its composition, superior to that of any other writings whatever; so as to be convinced, that, considering the age in which it appeared, it could only have been written by a person divinely inspired. The numerous marks of genuine piety, that occur through the whole book, will preclude the idea of imposition, in any person acquainted with human nature. It is likewise so suitable a continuation of the prophecies of Daniel, that the New Testament dispensation would have been incomplete without this prophetic book; for it has been the uniform plan of the divine proceedings to give a more distinct view of interesting future events, as the time of their accomplishment approached *. Since, however, two eminent critics † of later times have sus-

* Dr. Priestley's Notes on Scripture, vol. iv. p. 574. The argument, briefly noticed by him, is prosecuted at length by Mr. Lowman in his Paraphrase and Commentary on the Revelations, pp. x. et seq. 8vo edit.

† Michaelis and Dr. Less.

pected this book to be spurious, and as their valuable writings are in the hands of almost every biblical student, it becomes necessary to examine the external and internal evidence for its genuineness.

1. The *external evidence* for the authenticity and inspiration of the Apocalypse is to be collected from the same sources as the evidence for the other books of the New Testament, viz. from the testimonies of those antient writers, who, living at a period near to its publication, appear by their quotations or allusions to have received it as a part of sacred Scripture. And this evidence is so abundant and explicit, that the only difficulty is how to comprize it within that short compass which the nature of the present work requires.

(1). *Testimonies of writers in the apostolic age.*

In the "Shepherd," or "Pastor" of Hermas (A. D. 100), there are several expressions so closely resembling the style and sentiments of the Apocalypse, as to render it more than probable that he had read and imitated this book *. The reason why the Apocalypse and other books of the New Testament were not expressly cited by this father, is, that it was not suitable to his design; but the allusions to them sufficiently show the respect in which they were held †.

Ignatius (A. D. 107.) is supposed by Michaelis to have passed over the Apocalypse in silence; but Dr. Woodhouse has produced three passages from the writings of that father, which have escaped the researches of the learned and accurate Dr. Lardner, and in which the verbal resemblance is so decisive, that it is impossible to conceive otherwise than that the Revelation was known to and read by Ignatius ‡.

Polycarp also (A. D. 108.) has cited the Apocalypse once in the only Epistle of his that has come down to our times; and the pious and sublime prayer which this holy man uttered at the awful moment when the flames were about to be kindled around him, begins with the identical words of the elders in Rev. xi. 17 §. There is likewise strong reason to believe that it was received by Papias A. D. 116 ||.

* Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 62—65; 4to, vol. i. pp. 311—313.

† Dr. Woodhouse thinks the evidence from Hermas not satisfactory. Dissertation on the Apocalypse, pp. 35, *et seq.*

‡ Ibid. pp. 31—34. The testimony of Ignatius is, we think, most satisfactorily vindicated against the exceptions of Michaelis.

§ Ibid. pp. 36—38.

|| Ibid. pp. 38—43, where the evidence of Papias is vindicated against Michaelis. See also Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 113, 114; 4to, vol. i. p. 340.

(2). *Testimonies of writers in the second century.*

Justin Martyr (A. D. 140.) was acquainted with the Apocalypse, and received it as written by the apostle John; and it appears from the testimony of Jerome, that he also interpreted or wrote commentaries on some parts of this mystical book, though no work of this kind has come down to us*.

Among the works of Melito bishop of Sardis (A. D. 177) was a commentary on the Apocalypse†. It is also most distinctly quoted in the Epistle of the churches of Vienne and Lyons (A. D. 177), concerning the sufferings of their martyrs‡. Irenæus bishop of Lyons in Gaul (A. D. 178), who in his younger days was acquainted with Polycarp, repeatedly quotes this book as ‘the Revelation of John the disciple of the Lord.’ Dr. Lardner remarks, that his testimony is so strong and full, that he seems to put it beyond all question that it is the work of John the apostle and evangelist§. To these we may add the undisputed testimonies of Athenagoras||, Theophilus bishop of Antioch (A. D. 181)**, Apollonius (A. D. 186 or 187)††, Clement of Alexandria‡‡, and especially of Tertullian, who defends the authenticity of this book against the heretic Marcion and his followers, by asserting its external evidence. He appeals to the Asiatic churches, and assures us that “though Marcion rejects his (John’s) Revelation, yet the succession of bishops, traced to its origin, will establish John to be its author.” It also appears from another part of his writings that this book was much read and generally received in the African churches of the second century§§.

(3). *Among the testimonies of writers in the third century*, those of Hippolytus Portuensis (A. D. 220) and Origen (A. D. 280), are conspicuous. Hippolytus|||, who was a disciple of Irenæus, received the Apocalypse as the work of Saint John, and wrote two books in its defence, one in opposition to Caius, a writer of the second century, who is said to have ascribed the Reve-

* Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 126. vol. vi. p. 628; 4to, vol. i. p. 348. vol. iii. p. 417.

† Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 147, 148; 4to, vol. i. pp. 359, 360.

‡ Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 152, 153; 4to, vol. i. p. 362. Woodhouse, pp. 46—48.

§ Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 170; 4to, vol. i. p. 372. The testimony of Irenæus is vindicated by Dr. Woodhouse, pp. 26—28.

|| Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 186; 4to, vol. i. p. 381.

** Ibid. 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 200, 201; 4to, vol. i. p. 389.

†† Apollonius suffered martyrdom at Rome. His writings have perished; but Eusebius relates that he supported the Apocalypse by authorities taken from it. Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 18, *fine*, and c. 21.

‡‡ Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 229, 230; 4to, vol. i. pp. 404, 405.

§§ Tertullian adv. Marcion, lib. iv. c. 5. De Monogam. c. 12. See Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 277; 4to, vol. i. p. 430. Woodhouse, p. 51.

||| Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 412; 4to, vol. i. p. 502.

lation to Cerinthus, and the other in opposition to the Alogi, who rejected the Gospel of Saint John as spurious. Origen*, to whose critical labours biblical literature is so deeply indebted, most explicitly acknowledged the Revelation to be the production of Saint John, and has cited it repeatedly in his works. More minute evidence than this it is not necessary to adduce, as those who oppose the genuineness of this book do not descend lower than the time of Origen. It may, however, be satisfactory to know that it was subsequently received by Gregory of Neo-Cæsarea†; by Cyprian and the African churches; by the presbyters and others of the church of Rome; by various Latin authors whose history is abstracted by Dr. Lardner; by the anonymous author of a work against the Novatians; by the Novatians themselves; by Commodian; by Victorinus, who wrote a commentary upon it; by the author of the poem against the Marcionites; by Methodius, who also commented upon it; by the Manicheans; by the later Arnobius; by the Donatists; by Lactantius; and by the Arians‡.

(4). In the time of Eusebius, *in the former part of the fourth century*, the Apocalypse was *generally*, though not universally, received; and therefore he classes it among the *Ἀντιλεγόμενα* or contradicted books§. Yet it is worthy of remark, that these doubts originated solely in the *supposed* difference of style and manner from that of Saint John; and that no one, however desirous he may have been to invalidate the authority of the book, appears to have been able to produce any *external* evidence which might suit the purpose.

It was received, after the time of Eusebius, by the Latin churches, almost without exception. Jerome, the most learned and diligent inquirer of that century, pronounced most positively in its favour; and was followed universally by the fathers of the Western churches: and from him we learn the grounds upon

* Lardner, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 466, 467. 483; 4to, vol. i. pp. 532, 533. 541.

† The testimony of Dionysius of Alexandria (A. D. 247) is here designedly omitted. He allowed the Apocalypse to be written by John, a holy and inspired apostolical man, but not the evangelist John; and he grounded his inference on some supposed differences in style. This subject is considered in pp. 655—659, *infra*.

‡ Lardner, 8vo, vol. vi. p. 629; 4to, vol. iii. p. 448, where there are references to the former volumes of his works, containing the testimonies of the above-cited fathers and others at length. Woodhouse, pp. 60—77. Lampe, Comment. in Evangelium Joannis, tom. i. pp. 115—124. Pritii Introd. ad Nov. Test. pp. 117, *et seq.*

§ The Apocalypse is omitted in the catalogues of canonical books formed by Cyril Bishop of Jerusalem (A. D. 340), and by the council of Laodicea (A. D. 364), and in one or two other early catalogues of the Scriptures; but this omission was probably not owing to any suspicion concerning its authenticity or genuineness, but because its obscurity and mysteriousness were thought to render it less fit to be read publicly and generally. Bishop Tomline's Elements of Christian Theology, vol. i. p. 506.

which he received the Apocalypse, which he assigns to be "the authority of the antients," that is, *external evidence*; and he tells us at the same time, that he does not follow "the fashion of his times"—that fashion by which some of the Greek churches were induced to reject the Apocalypse.

"This fashion of the times," Dr. Woodhouse justly remarks, "seems to have consisted in a daring contempt of the testimonies of the antient church, and a ready acquiescence in those arguments which were confidently drawn from internal evidence. Yet, notwithstanding this fashion, which appears to have had considerable prevalence in the Greek church, and perhaps to have influenced those eminent men, Cyril of Jerusalem, and John Chrysostom (neither of whom appears to have quoted the Apocalypse), many of great name in the Greek church appear still to have received it; and, in the fourth century, it is supported by testimonies in this church from Athanasius, Basil, Epiphanius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzum" *.

Upon the whole, though doubts were entertained concerning this book by many individuals of the Greek church after the time of Eusebius, and though we have no satisfactory information how early, or to what extent, it was received by the Syrian churches, yet, from the decisive evidence above adduced, we are authorized to affirm that the Apocalypse has been generally received in all ages. To borrow the eloquent sentiments of Dr. Woodhouse—"We have seen its rise, as of a pure fountain from the sacred rock of the apostolical church. We have traced it through the first century of its passage, flowing from one fair field to another, identified through them all, and everywhere the same. As it proceeded lower, we have seen attempts to obscure its sacred origin, to arrest or divert its course, to lose it in the sands of antiquity, or bury it in the rubbish of the dark ages. We have seen these attempts repeated in our own times, and by a dexterous adversary. But it has at length arrived to us, such as it flowed forth at the beginning" †.

In short, so far as *external evidence* can enable us to determine concerning this book, we may indubitably pronounce that it IS TO BE RECEIVED as "divine Scripture communicated to the church by John the apostle and evangelist."

* Woodhouse, pp. 78—84. Lardner, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 630, 631; 4to, vol. iii. pp. 448, 449.

† Woodhouse, p. 87.

2. We now proceed briefly to consider the *internal evidence* for the genuineness and divine authority of the Apocalypse. This we may reduce to three points, viz. 1. Its correspondence, in point of doctrine and of imagery, with other books of divine authority; — 2. The sublimity of this book; — 3. The coincidence of its style with the uncontested writings of Saint John.

(1). *The Apocalypse corresponds in doctrine and imagery with other books of divine authority.* Though the doctrines of Christianity are by no means a *principal* subject of this book, yet, if we advert to the doctrines actually delivered in it, we shall find a perfect congruity with those delivered in the other apostolical writings. Michaelis has said, that “the true and eternal Godhead of Christ is certainly not taught so clearly in the Apocalypse as in Saint John’s Gospel.” To this Dr. Woodhouse replies — Could he expect so clear an exposition from a prophecy which respects future events, as from a Gospel which the ancients have described as written principally with the view of setting forth the divine nature of Christ? But this divine nature is also set forth in the Apocalypse, and as clearly as the nature of the book, and as symbols, can express it. Compare Rev. i. 11. iii. 21. v. 6—14. xix. 13. and xxii. 8*. The description of the Millenium in the twentieth chapter, where the servants of Christ are seen raised from the dead to reign with him a thousand years, has been objected to, as introducing doctrines inconsistent with the purity enjoined in the Gospel. But the representation in question is no *doctrine*; it is a prediction delivered in a figurative style, and yet unfulfilled. The extravagant notions of the Chiliasts cannot with justice be charged upon the Apocalypse. The prophecy can only be explained in general terms; in due time we believe that it will be fulfilled, and in the mean time it must be received as the word of God, though we understand it not. It has also been objected by Dr. Less, that the triumph of the saints, upon the horrid punishment of their enemies (Rev. xix. 1—10. xxii. 8, 9), is irreconcilable with the charitable spirit of the Gospel. But no such *literal* triumph was designed: the passage in question is the triumph of pure religion over idolatrous superstition and

* We may add also, that the *reality* of Christ’s sufferings is explicitly asserted (Rev. i. 5. v. 7) in conformity with the accounts of the evangelists, and the constant tenor of the New Testament. Whence it is evident that the Apocalypse could not have been written by the heresiarch Cerinthus, (as some early writers asserted) for he maintained that Christ did not suffer, but only Jesus. Michaelis (vol. iv. p. 469) and Dr. Lardner (Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 111, 112; 4to, vol. i. pp. 638, 639) have both shown that Cerinthus could not have been the author of the Revelation.

tyranny, represented *allegorically*, at which every true believer must rejoice. Michaelis likewise has objected to other passages of the Apocalypse, as containing doctrines repugnant to those delivered in the other parts of Scripture; but these passages, when fully examined, will be found to contain no doctrines, but figurative representations of future events. "We may therefore truly assert of the Apocalypse, that, fairly understood, it contains nothing which, either in point of doctrine, or in relation of events, past or to come, will be found to contradict any previous divine revelation. It accords with the divine counsels already revealed. It expands and reveals them more completely. We see the gradual flow of sacred prophecy (according to the true tenor of it, acknowledged by divines), first a fountain, then a rill, then, by the union of other divine streams, increasing in its course, till at length, by the accession of the prophetical waters of the New Testament, and, above all, by the acquisition of the apocalyptical succours, it becomes a noble river, enriching and adorning the Christian land" *.

(2). *The sublimity of the ideas and imagery is another striking internal evidence of the genuineness and divine origin of the Apocalypse.* These ideas and this imagery are such as are only to be found in the sacred Scriptures. "In the Word of God there is a grandeur and majesty, independent of the accidents of language, consisting in the greatness and sublimity of the things revealed. Men of genius may catch some sparks of this heavenly fire, they may imitate it, and with considerable success. But no one is found so confident in this kind of strength, as to neglect the arts of composition. Mahomet was a man of superior genius; in writing his pretended revelation, he borrowed much from the sacred Scriptures; he attempted often, in imitation of them, to be simply sublime; but he did not trust to this only: he endeavoured to adorn his work with all the imposing charms of human eloquence, and cultivated language; and he appealed to the perfection of his compositions, as a proof of their divine original. Such an appeal would have little served his cause in a critical and enlightened age, which would expect far other internal proofs of divinity than those which result from elegant diction. The learned of such an age would reject a prophet appealing to a proof which has never been admitted with respect to former revelations; a prophet, who, both in doctrine, and in the relation of events, past and future, is seen to contradict, or add strange extravagant conceits to, the credible and well-attested revelations of former times.

* Woodhouse, pp. 89—96, 133.

“There is nothing of this kind in the Apocalypse. Compare it with forged prophecies: many such have been written; some calculated to deceive, others only to amuse. These works, if they amaze us, as appearing to have been fulfilled, are commonly found to have been written *after* the events foretold, and to have a retrospective date which does not belong to them. But no one can show that the Apocalypse contains prophecies which were fulfilled before they were written.” *

Compare also the Apocalypse with the apocryphal revelations ascribed to the apostles Peter, Paul, Thomas, and Stephen, some fragments of which are still extant †. How different are the language, character, and sentiments of these spurious productions! The fathers of the first centuries compared them at length, and rejected them all except this acknowledged work of Saint John; which they guarded with so sedulous a care as to preserve it, in the main, free from interpolations, while the genuine productions of Polycarp, Ignatius, and other apostolical men are known to have suffered from the contact of profane pens ‡.

(3). *The style of the Apocalypse coincides with the style of the undisputed writings of Saint John.* The proof of this depends upon a collation of passages: Wetstein and Dr. Lardner have both collected a great number of evidences, in which the same forms of expression occur in the Apocalypse as are found in his Gospel and first Epistle, and which are peculiar to this apostle.

From their lists we have selected the following; more might easily be added, if we had room for their insertion.—Compare

Rev. i. 1.	with	John xii. 33. xviii. 37. xxi. 19.
Rev. i. 5.	- -	1 John v. 7.
Rev. i. 7.	- - -	John xix. 37.
Rev. ii. 7.	- -	John vi. 32.
Rev. ii. 10.	- -	John xx. 27.
Rev. ii. 17.	- - -	John vi. 32.
Rev. iii. 4.	- -	John vi. 66.
Rev. iii. 7.	- - -	John i. 14. xiv. 6. 1 John v. 20.
Rev. iii. 7. 9.	- -	John xv. 20. xvii. 6. 1 John ii. 5.
Rev. iii. 9.	- -	John xi. 27.
Rev. iii. 10.	- -	John xii. 27.
Rev. iii. 21.	- - -	1 John ii. 13, 14. iv. 4. v. 5.

* Woodhouse, p. 99.

† In the Codex Pseudepigraphus Novi Testamenti of Fabricius, and Mr. Jeremiah Jones's elaborate work on the New Testament.

‡ Woodhouse, p. 100.

Rev. v. 6. 12.	with	John i. 29. 36.
Rev. vi. 2.	-	John i. 29.
Rev. ix. 5.	-	John xviii. 26. iii. 17.
Rev. xii. 9.	-	John xii. 31.
Rev. xix. 13.	-	John i. 1.
Rev. xxi. 6.	-	John vii. 37.
Rev. xxi. 27.	-	John vi. 36. 1 John i. 4. (Gr.)

In all which passages we have instances of neuter adjectives and participles put for masculines.

Rev. xxii. 14.	-	John i. 12. Εξουσία, right.
Rev. xxii. 8. 10.	-	John viii. 51, 52. 55. xiv. 23, 24*.

In these passages the agreement both in style and expression is so great, that it is impossible to conceive how such striking coincidences could exist, in writings so different in their natures as the Gospel and first Epistle of John and the Apocalypse, if they were not all the productions of one and the same author. But it has been objected that there are differences in the style of this book, which render it uncertain whether it was really written by the apostle. These objections were first started by Dionysius of Alexandria, who contended that the Apocalypse was not the production of Saint John, and conjectured that it was written by John, an elder of the Ephesian church. His objections are six in number, and as some of them have been adopted by Michaelis, we shall briefly state and consider them.

OBJECTION 1. *The evangelist John has not named himself, either in his Gospel, or in his Catholic Epistles; but the writer of the Revelation names himself more than once.*

ANSWER. It was not the practice of the other evangelists to put their names to their Gospels; nor is any name prefixed to the Epistle to the Hebrews; yet these writings are universally received as genuine and authentic. But though Saint John has not named himself in his Gospel, yet he has there so described himself† that it is impossible not to know him; and with regard to the Epistles, the persons to whom they were sent could not be ignorant from whom they came.

OBJECTION 2. *Though the writer of the Revelation calls himself John, he has not shown us that he is the apostle of that name.* Michaelis thinks that he ought at least to have made himself known by some such circumlocution as he had used in the Gospel—"the disciple whom Jesus loved."

* Wetstenii, Nov. Test. tom. ii. p. 747, note. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 121—123; 4to, vol. i. pp. 643, 644. See also Dr. Jortin's Discourses on the Christian Religion, pp. 225, 226, note.

† See John xxi. 24, and other places.

ANSWER. "Such addition to the name of John was totally needless. He wrote to the seven churches, and from Patmos, in which island he expresses that "he is suffering tribulation for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ." All the churches knew that he was then suffering banishment in that island, and they knew the cause of it, "for the word of God." An Epistle, containing the history of a heavenly vision, seen by John in the island of Patmos, required no other addition. What John would write John *alone*, without other addition or explanation, excepting the great John, John the apostle and president of all the churches? A private person would have described himself by the addition of his father's name, according to the custom of the ancients. A bishop or presbyter would have added the name of his church; but John the apostle needed no such distinguishing mark or appellation. A fabricator of an Epistle, containing a revelation in Saint John's name, would perhaps have added his titles of "Apostle of Jesus Christ," &c. or would have introduced some circumlocution in imitation of those in his Gospel; but, from the expression as it now stands, we derive a much stronger evidence that it is the genuine work of Saint John *."

OBJECTION 3. *The Revelation does not mention the Catholic Epistle, nor the Catholic Epistle the Revelation.*

ANSWER. It is not the practice of the sacred writers to quote themselves, or refer to their own works, unless they write more than one Epistle to the same churches or persons, in which case they mention such former Epistle. This, Dr. Lardner observes, is natural, and it is done by Saint Paul; but in his Epistle to the Romans he is totally silent concerning any of his former Epistles, though, at the time of writing it, he had written several.

OBJECTION 4. *There is a great resemblance in sentiment, manner, and expression between the Gospel and the first Epistle of Saint John; but the Revelation is altogether different, without any affinity or resemblance whatever.*

ANSWER. In the first place, if it were true that there was such a difference of style as Dionysius and (after him) Michaelis have asserted, it may be accounted for by the dif-

* Saint Paul, in the opening of his Epistles, has used generally, not always, the term "Apostle;" but with him it was more necessary than with Saint John, who was confessedly such, having been numbered with the twelve. Saint Paul's right to the apostleship, having been established more privately, had been doubted by some, which leads him to say, "Am not I an apostle?" &c. (1 Cor. ix. 1.) and therefore he generally asserts himself, in his Epistles, to be an apostle. Saint John had no need to use the term: his authority as an apostle was undoubted: he therefore calls himself by a humbler title, "A brother and companion in tribulation:" so Saint James, although an apostle, mentions himself only as "A servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ." (James i. 1). Woodhouse, p. 114.

ference of subject. The style of history is not the style of an epistle or a prophecy. The style of history is simple; of an epistle, familiar; and that of prophecy is sublime; and such unquestionably is the style of the Revelation. But, secondly, this objection is contradicted by fact; and the proofs adduced in pp. 654, 655. will show that the coincidence between the Apocalypse and the undisputed Gospel and Epistle of Saint John is such, that they must have been written by one and the same author.

OBJECTION 5. *The Gospel and Epistle of John are written in correct and elegant Greek, but the writer of the Revelation discovers no accurate knowledge of that language; on the contrary, the Apocalypse abounds with barbarisms and solecisms.*

ANSWER. This objection is founded on the mistaken idea that the writers of the New Testament wrote in *Attic Greek*; which, we have already seen*, is not the case. The same grammatical irregularities which have been objected to in the Apocalypse are also observable in the Septuagint, as well as in the Gospels and other writings of the New Testament. But this difference of language may also be accounted for by the length of time which may have elapsed between the composing of these books, for it is not unlikely that one and the same person writing upon different arguments, and at a great distance of time, especially if he be one who does not frequently exercise his style, or write in the intermediate space, should have a very different manner in his several performances. Now the Gospel of Saint John, we have seen, was written about the year 97—that is, about thirty years after the events recorded in it. At such a distance of time, Dr. Woodhouse remarks, the mind is enabled to look back with composure, and to represent with serenity transactions which could not be narrated soon after they had happened, without warm and passionate expressions. It seems to be owing partly to this cause, that the evangelist is seen to relate in so cool a style, in the Gospel, those sufferings of his beloved Lord which he had witnessed, and which, if related by him immediately after the events had taken place, could not have been told otherwise than with commotion and indignation. But the Apocalypse was written by its author immediately after he had seen the vision; the impressions on his mind had no time to cool; his expressions kept pace with his feelings, and his style became vivid and glowing†. There is no necessity, therefore, for having recourse to the hypothesis of a Hebrew original, and of sup-

* See Vol. I. pp. 239—243. On the Nature of the New Testament Greek.

† Woodhouse, p. 122.

posing our Greek text to be a version of it, as some critics have imagined; but which hypothesis is totally unsupported by the evidence of antiquity.

OBJECTION 6. *The book is so obscure as to be unintelligible, and is therefore improperly called a Revelation.*

This trifling objection, for such it is pronounced to be by Dr. Lardner, was first published by Dionysius, who represents it as being entertained by many persons in his time (the middle of the third century). In our time it has been adopted by Michaelis, who has laid much stress upon it; but this objection admits of the following simple and satisfactory

ANSWER.—In the first place, the author might with great propriety call that a revelation, which had been communicated to him in an extraordinary manner; though he had received it, and was to represent it, in a figurative and emblematical style. But, secondly, this revelation is often spoken of as a prophecy (see Rev. i. 13. and xxii. 7. 10. 18, 19). Now, it is the nature of prophecies to be obscure when delivered, and for some time after*, even in the case of prophecies fulfilled; “because the language in which they are delivered is symbolical, which, though governed by certain rules, and therefore attainable by the judicious among the learned, is nevertheless very liable to misconstruction in rash and unskilful hands. But prophecies, yet unfulfilled, are necessarily involved in deeper darkness, because the event is wanting to compare with the prediction, which of itself is designedly obscure. This same objection of obscurity will operate as forcibly against many of the prophecies of the Old and of the New Testament, as against those of the Apocalypse; particularly the predictions which appertain to the latter days. The book of Daniel, which has our Saviour’s seal to it (Matt. xxiv. 15), must be rejected with the Apocalypse, if it be a sufficient objection to it, that it is yet in many places obscure†”—a conclusion this, to which no Christian can or will give his assent.

So far, however, is the obscurity of this prophecy from making against its genuineness, that it is, on the contrary, a strong internal proof of its authenticity and divine original: “for it is a part of this prophecy,” Sir Isaac Newton well argues, that it should not be understood before the last age of the world; and therefore it makes for the credit of the prophecy that it is not yet understood. The folly of interpreters,” he justly continues, “has been, to foretel times and things by this prophecy,

* See 2 Pet. i. 19. 1 Pet. i. 10—12 and Luke xxiv. 25—27. 32. 44—46.

† Woodhouse, p. 103.

as if God designed to make them prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the prophecy also into contempt. The design of God was much otherwise. He gave this and the prophecies of the Old Testament, not to gratify men's curiosities by enabling them to foreknow things, but that after they were fulfilled, they might be interpreted by the event, and his own providence, not the interpreter's, be then manifested thereby to the world. For the event of things, predicted many ages before, will then be a convincing argument that the world is governed by providence. For as the few and obscure prophecies concerning Christ's first coming were for setting up the Christian religion, which all nations have since corrupted; so the many and clear prophecies concerning the things to be done at Christ's second coming, are not only for predicting but also for effecting a recovery and re-establishment of the long-lost truth, and setting up a kingdom wherein dwells righteousness. The event will prove the Apocalypse; and this prophecy, thus proved and understood, will open the old prophets, and all together will make known the true religion, and establish it. There is already so much of the prophecy fulfilled, that as many as will take pains in this study, may see sufficient instances of God's providence: but then the signal revolutions predicted by all the holy prophets will at once both turn men's eyes upon considering the predictions, and plainly interpret them. Till then we must content ourselves with interpreting what hath been already fulfilled*.

Such are the most material objections that have been brought against the genuineness and divine authority of this portion of the New Testament. In addition to the very satisfactory answers, above given from the writings of pious and learned men, it were no difficult task to add numerous other considerations, all tending to show its divine original; but the preceding testimonies, both external and internal, will, we apprehend, be found abundantly sufficient to prove that the Apocalypse is the unquestionable production of the apostle and evangelist Saint John, and of no other John who is mentioned by ecclesiastical writers. It consequently follows, that this book has "an indubitable right to that place in the canon of sacred Scripture; which the antient fathers of the church have assigned to it, and which the reformers in the Protestant churches have with mature deliberation confirmed†."

* Sir Isaac Newton's Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of Saint John, pp. 251—253.

† Lampe, Comment. in Evang. Joannis, tom. i. pp. 125—131. Lardner's Works, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 110—128; 4to, vol. i. pp. 627—647. Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 461

III. The time when this book was written is a subject that has much engaged the attention of the learned; and on this point not fewer than six opinions have been advanced. Four of these are of sufficient importance to be considered in this place.

1. It has been asserted that the Apocalypse was written in the reign of the emperor Claudius. Epiphanius is the only antient father whose testimony has been adduced in behalf of this opinion, and he did not live till *three hundred* years later than Saint John. Although this date is sanctioned by Grotius, who supposes that the visions of the book were seen at several times, and that they were afterwards joined together in one book; yet there are two very material objections against it. The *first* is, that there was no persecution of the Christians in the reign of Claudius, and consequently Saint John's banishment to Patmos cannot be referred to that period. This emperor did, indeed, issue an edict for banishing the Jews from Rome, but it did not affect the Jews in the provinces, much less the Christians; and the governors had no authority to banish either Jews or Christians out of their provinces without an order from the emperor: besides, it does not appear that Saint John was at Ephesus during the reign of Claudius. The *second* objection to this date is founded on the circumstance, that the seven churches in Asia, to which the Apocalypse is addressed, did not exist so early as the reign of Claudius: for this fact cannot be reconciled with the history given of the first planting of Christianity in Asia Minor related in the Acts of the Apostles.

2. It has been maintained, on the authority of the subscription to the Syriac version of the Apocalypse, that Saint John was banished to Patmos, and wrote the Apocalypse in that island, in the reign of the emperor Nero, before the destruction of Jerusalem. This opinion is adopted by Sir Isaac Newton; but it is untenable, for the Apocalypse was not translated into Syriac until the middle of the *sixth* century*, and the anonymous subscription is of no force.

3. Another hypothesis makes this book to have been written before the time of Domitian, and before the Jewish war; but it does not determine whether it was in the reign of Claudius, or in that of Nero.

—500. 528—544. Dr. Woodhouse's Dissertation, pp. 89—141. Dr. W. has considered at length, and refuted, several minor objections of Michaelis and Dr. Less, which want of room has compelled us to omit.

* See Vol. I. p. 297.

4. The most probable and generally received opinion is, that Saint John was banished into Patmos towards the end of Domitian's reign, by virtue of his edicts for persecuting the Christians; and that he had the Revelations contained in the Apocalypse during his exile; though the book itself could not have been published until after the apostle's release and return to Ephesus. The unanimous voice of Christian antiquity attests, that Saint John was banished by the order of Domitian. Irenæus, Origen, and other early fathers refer the apostle's exile to the latter part of Domitian's reign, and they concur in saying that he there saw the Revelation. Internal evidence likewise supports this conclusion. For, in the three first chapters of the Apocalypse, the seven Asiatic churches are described as being in that advanced and flourishing state of society and discipline, and to have undergone those changes in their faith and morals, which could not have taken place if they had not been planted for a considerable time. Thus, the church of Ephesus is censured for having left "her first love." That of Sardis "had a name to live, but was dead." The church of Laodicea had fallen into lukewarmness and indifference. Now the church of Ephesus, for instance, was not founded by Saint Paul until the latter part of Claudian's reign: and when he wrote to them from Rome, A. D. 61, instead of reproving them for any want of love, he commends their love and faith (Eph. i. 15). Further, it appears from the Revelation that the Nicolaitans formed a sect, when this book was written, since they are expressly named: whereas they were only foretold in general terms by Saint Peter in his second Epistle, written A. D. 65, and in Saint Jude's Epistle, which was written about A. D. 65 or 66. It is also evident from various passages of the Revelation, that there had been an open persecution in the provinces. Saint John himself had been banished into Patmos for the testimony of Jesus. The church of Ephesus (or its bishop) is commended for its "labour and *patience*," which seems to imply persecution. This is still more evident in the following address to the church of Smyrna (Rev. ii. 9). "I know thy works and *tribulation*," θλῖψις; which last word always denotes persecution in the New Testament, and is so explained in the following verse.

Lastly, in Rev. ii. 13. mention is made of a martyr named Antipas, who was put to death at Pergamos. Though antient ecclesiastical history gives us no information concerning this Antipas, yet it is certain, according to all the rules of language, that what is here said is to be understood literally, and not mystically, as some expositors have explained it. Since therefore the persecution, mentioned in the three first chapters of

the Apocalypse, cannot relate to the time of Claudius, who did not persecute the Christians, nor to the time of Nero, whose persecution did not reach the provinces, it must necessarily be referred to Domitian, according to ecclesiastical tradition*.

Domitian's death is related to have happened in September A. D. 96. The Christian exiles were then liberated, and Saint John was permitted to return to Ephesus. As, however, the emperor's decease, and the permission to return, could not be known in Asia immediately, some time must intervene before the apostle could be at liberty either to write the Apocalypse at Ephesus †, or to send it by messengers from Patmos. We conclude therefore, with Dr. Mill. Le Clerc, Basnage, Dr. Lardner, Bishop Tomline, Dr. Woodhouse, and other eminent critics, in placing the Apocalypse in the year 96 or 97 ‡.

IV. The occasion of writing the Apocalypse is sufficiently evident from the book itself. Saint John, being in exile in the island of Patmos, is favoured with the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to him, and is repeatedly commanded to commit to writing the visions which he beheld. (See Rev. i. 11. 19. ii. 1. 8. 12. 18. iii. 1. 7. 14. xiv. 13. xix. 9. and xxi. 5). The scope or design of this book is twofold; *first*, generally to make known to the apostle "the things which are" (i. 19), that is, the then present state of the Christian churches in Asia; and, *secondly* and principally, to reveal to him "the things which shall be hereafter," or the constitution and fates of the Christian church, through its several periods of propagation, corruption, and amendment, from its beginning to its consummation in glory. "The prophecy of the Revelation," says Daubuz, "was designed as a standing monument to the church, to know what destinies attend it; and that, when men should suffer for the name of Christ, they might here find some consolation both for themselves and for the church:—for themselves, by the prospect and certainty of a reward;—for the church, by the testimony that Christ never forsakes it, but will conquer at last."

V. The Apocalypse therefore consists of two principal divisions or parts; viz.

After the title of the book (i. 1—3),

* Beausobre et L'Enfant, Préface sur l'Apocalypse de Saint Jean, pp. 613, 614.

† From the expression in Rev. i. 9. "*I was in the Isle of Patmos*," Dr. Woodhouse is of opinion that there seems to be internal evidence that the Revelation was written after Saint John had left Patmos.

‡ Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 518—528. Lardner, 8vo, vol. vi. pp. 633—638; 4to, vol. i. pp. 450—453. Dr. Woodhouse's Dissertation, pp. 6—25. Pritii Introd. ad Nov. Test. pp. 126—132.

PART I. contains *αἱ τὰ ἐν τῷ νῦν*, the “*things which are—*” that is, the then present state of the church.

SECTION 1. Saint John’s Epistle to the seven churches, and his account of the appearance of the Lord Jesus with the symbols of his power, together with the commission given by him to the apostle, to write what he beholds (i. 9—20).

SECTION 2. The Address or Epistle to the Church at Ephesus (ii. 1—7).

SECTION 3. The Address or Epistle to the Church at Smyrna (ii. 8—11).

SECTION 4. The Address or Epistle to the Church at Pergamos (ii. 12—17).

SECTION 5. The Address or Epistle to the Church at Thyatira (ii. 18—29).

SECTION 6. The Address or Epistle to the Church at Sardis (iii. 1—6).

SECTION 7. The Address or Epistle to the Church at Philadelphia (iii. 7—13).

SECTION 8. The Address or Epistle to the Church at Laodicea (iii. 14—22).

The seven churches of the Lydian or Proconsular Asia, to which these Epistles were addressed, are supposed to have been planted by the apostle Paul and his assistants during their ministry. They lie nearly in an amphitheatre, and are addressed according to their geographical positions, viz.

1. *Ephesus*.—See a notice of this city and church *supra*, p. 530 of this volume. It is not known from whom the Nicolaitans mentioned in the Epistle to the Ephesian church derived their name. They are supposed to have held the opinion, subsequently adopted by the Gnostics, who denied the humanity of Jesus Christ, and the reality of his sufferings in the flesh; and in their practices, which are noticed in Rev. ii. 6. with detestation, they are said to have been singularly profligate and impure. They are supposed to have been alluded to in 2 Pet. ii. and Jude 7—19.

2. *Smyrna* was situated between 40 and 45 miles to the north of Ephesus, of which city it was originally a colony. It is now celebrated chiefly for the number, wealth, and commerce of the inhabitants. Of its population, which is estimated at 140,000 inhabitants, about 26,000 are Christians in communion with the Greek church; 5,000 are Roman Catholics, and 140 are Protestants. The Christians here are in better condition than in any other of the seven churches. The angel of the church of Smyrna, addressed in the second Apocalyptic Epistle, is supposed to have been Polycarp, the disciple of Saint John,

by whom he was appointed bishop of Smyrna. As he afterwards suffered much, being burnt alive at Smyrna A. D. 166, the exhortation in Rev. ii. 10. would be peculiarly calculated to support and encourage him.

3. *Pergamos* was the antient metropolis of Mysia, and the residence of the Attalian kings. Its present population is computed at about 30,000 inhabitants, of whom 3000 are Christians, except about 200 who are Armenians. They have each *one* church, but its other churches have been converted into mosques, and are profaned with the blasphemies of the pseudo-prophet Mohammed. Pergamos, or Bergamo as it is now called, lies about 64 miles north of Smyrna.

4. *Thyatira* was a considerable city in the road from Pergamos to Sardis, and about 48 miles eastward of the former. It is called by the Turks Ak-hisar; and the number of Christians here is about as great as at Bergamo.

5. *Sardis*, once the celebrated capital of Croesus and the Lydian kings, is now reduced to a wretched village called Sart, 'A few names' (for the Christians are stated not to exceed seven in number), however, are still remaining; and they received a copy of the New Testament, in Romaic or modern Greek, with the utmost gratitude, from an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

6. *Philadelphia* derived its name from its founder, Attalus Philadelphus, and is situated about twenty-seven miles to the south-east of Sardis. Not long before the date of the Apocalyptic Epistle, this city had suffered so much from earthquakes, that it had been in a great measure deserted by its inhabitants; which may in some degree account for the poverty of this church as described in this Epistle. And its poverty may also in some degree account for its virtue, which is so highly commended. "Philadelphia appears to have resisted the attacks of the Turks in 1312 with more success than the other cities. At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperor, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years, and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans (Bajazet) in 1390. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect—a column in a scene of ruins! * Whatever may be lost of the spirit of Christianity, there is still the form of a Christian church in this city, which is now called *Alah-shehr*. It contains about 1000 Christians, chiefly Greeks, most of

* Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. xi. p. 438, 8vo edit.

whom speak only the Turkish language. They have twenty-five places of public worship, five of which are large and regular churches, with a resident bishop and twenty inferior clergy.

7. *Laodicea* lay about 42 miles to the south of Ephesus; and in the primitive times of Christianity, as appears from Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, in which the Laodiceans are frequently mentioned, possessed a flourishing church. But the doom of *Laodicea* seems to have been more severe and terrible than that of the other six apocalyptic churches. At *Eski-hisar*, close to the ruins of *Laodicea*, there reside about fifty poor inhabitants, *two* only of whom are Christians, who live together in a small mill, and neither of whom can read! The stately edifices of antient *Laodicea* are now peopled with wolves and jackals. The prayers of the mosque are the only prayers heard near the ruins of this city, on which the prophetic denunciation seems to have been fully executed, in its utter rejection as a church *.

Vitringa and other eminent commentators have supposed that the seven Epistles to the apocalyptic churches are prophetical of so many successive periods and states of the church, from the beginning of Christianity to the consummation of all things. But for this opinion, Bishop Newton thinks, there does not appear to be sufficient evidence, and it is in fact contradicted by the book of Revelation itself; for the last state of the church is here described as the most glorious of all, but in the last state in these Epistles, that of *Laodicea*, the church is represented as "wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." But though these Epistles have rather a literal than a mystical meaning, yet they contain excellent precepts and exhortations, commendations and reproofs, promises and threatenings, which are calculated to afford instruction to the universal church of Christ at all times. "Some churches," Dr. Hales remarks, "like those of Sardis, Thyatira, and *Laodicea*, are lukewarm and greatly corrupted; others in a mixed state, as those of Ephesus and Pergamos; and some still rich, or rather flourishing, and have not denied the faith of Christ, as Smyrna and Philadelphia. And the admonitions addressed to them — 1. To repent and reform their ways; — 2. To reject false apostles and corrupt doctrines; — 3. To retain their patience and steadfastness in the faith; — 4. Under the penalty of having

* Smith's Survey of the Seven Churches of Asia, pp. 205—276. Bishop Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, vol. ii. pp. 166—174. The Rev. H. Lindsay's Visit to the Apocalyptic Churches (in 1815), in the Christian Observer, vol. xv. pp. 190, 191. See also Stosch's Syntagma Dissertationum Septem de Nominibus totidem Urbium Asiae, ad quas D. Joannes in Apocalypsi Filii Dei Epistolas direxit. 8vo, Guelpherbyti, 1757.

their 'lamps removed,' or their established churches extinguished — are equally addressed to all. '*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches*' in general (Rev. ii. 29. iii. 22)" *.

PART II. contains a prophecy of *ἃ μελλοῦσι γένησθαι*, "*the things which shall be hereafter*," or the future state of the church through succeeding ages, from the time when the apostle beheld the apocalyptic visions to the grand consummation of all things.

SECTION 1. The representation of the divine glory in heaven (iv).

SECTION 2. The sealed book, the Lamb who opens it, and the praises sung by the heavenly choir (v).

SECTION 3. The opening of the first six seals (vi).

SECTION 4. The sealing of the hundred and forty-four thousand, and the presentation of the palm-bearing multitude before the throne (vii).

SECTION 5. The opening of the seventh seal, and the six first trumpets, and the prophetic commission to Saint John.

(1). The opening of the seventh seal, and the commission to the angel with the seven trumpets (viii. 1—5).

(2). The *four* first trumpets (viii. 6—12), and the denunciation of the three woes (13).

(3). The *fifth* trumpet and the *first* woe (ix. 1—12).

(4). The *sixth* trumpet and the *second* woe (ix. 13—21).

(5). The first prophetic vision of the open little book, representing the different states of the Christian church to the end of the sixth trumpet—the measuring of the temple, and the two witnesses (x. 1—14.)

SECTION 6. The sounding of the seventh trumpet—the vision of the woman persecuted by the dragon, and of the wild beasts from the sea and from the land (xi. 15—19. xii. xiii).

SECTION 7. The vision of the Lamb and the hundred and forty-four thousand elect on Mount Sion, and the proclamations or warnings.

(1). The Lamb on Mount Sion (xii. 1—5).

(2). The *first* angel proclaims (xiv. 6, 7).

(3). The *second* angel proclaims (xiv. 8).

(4). The *third* angel proclaims (xiv. 9—12).

(5). The blessedness of those who die in the Lord proclaimed (xiv. 13).

(6). The vision of the harvest and the vintage (xiv. 14—20).

* Dr. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book ii. p. 1294. Bishop Newton's Dissertation, vol. ii. p. 167.

SECTION 8. contains the seven vials and the episode of the harlot of Babylon and her fall.

- (1). The vision preparatory to the seven vials (xv. xvi. 1).
- (2). The pouring out of the seven vials (xvi. 2—21).
- (3). The great harlot, or Babylon (xvii).
- (4). The judgment of Babylon continued (xviii).
- (5). Exultation in heaven over the fallen Babylon, and upon the approach of the New Jerusalem (xix. 1—10).

SECTION 9. contains the grand conflict, the millenium, the conflict renewed, the judgment, and the new creation.

- (1). The appearance of the Lord with his followers, for battle and victory (xix. 11—18).
- (2). The conflict and victory over the beast and false prophet (xix. 19—21).
- (3). Satan bound, and the millenium (xx. 1—6).
- (4). Satan loosed, deceives the nations, and is cast into the burning lake (xx. 7—10).
- (5). The general resurrection and final judgment (xx. 11—15).

SECTION 10. Description of the new Jerusalem (xxi. xxii. 1—5).

The CONCLUSION (xxii. 6—20.)

VI. No book has been more commented upon, or has given rise to a greater variety of interpretations than the Apocalypse, which has ever been accounted the most difficult portion of the New Testament. The figurative language in which the visions are delivered; the variety of symbols under which the events are presignified; the extent of the prophetic information, which appears to pervade all ages of the Christian church, afford little hope of its *perfect* elucidation, till a further process of time shall have ripened more of the events foretold in it, and have given safer scope to investigation*.

Referring the reader, therefore, to the works of Mede, Dabuz, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishops Newton and Hurd, Lowman, Faber, Dr. Hales, and others who have attempted to illustrate these sublime and mysterious prophecies, and especially to the learned and pious labours of Dr. Woodhouse, we shall conclude this article with the following canons of interpretation, which have been proposed by the last-mentioned eminent critic

* Brit. Crit. vol. xxix. (O. S.) p. 191. Rosenmüller (Scholia, vol. v. pp. 614—619) and Dr. A. Clarke (Preface to the Revelation, pp. i—x.) have given an abstract of various hypotheses relative to the interpretation of the Apocalypse, some of which are sufficiently *extravagant*.

and divine, who has most successfully applied them to the exposition of the Apocalypse.

1. Compare the language, the symbols, and the predictions of the Apocalypse with those of former revelations; and admit only such interpretation as shall appear to have the sanction of this divine authority.

2. Unless the language and symbols of the Apocalypse should in particular passages direct, or evidently require, another mode of application, the predictions are to be applied to the progressive church of Christ.

3. The kingdom which is the subject of this prophetic book, is not a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom;—not “a kingdom of this world” (John xviii. 36), not established by the means and apparatus of worldly pomp, not bearing the external ensigns of royalty; but governing the inward man, by possession of the ruling principles; *the kingdom of God*, says our Lord, *is within you* (Luke xvii. 21). The predictions relative to this kingdom, therefore, are to be spiritually interpreted. Wars, conquests, and revolutions, of vast extent and great political import, are not the object of the apocalyptical prophecies; unless they appear to have promoted or retarded in a considerable degree the *real* progress of the religion of Jesus Christ, whose proper reign is in the hearts and consciences of his subjects. “His reign is advanced, when Christian principles, when faith, and righteousness, and charity abound. It is retarded, when ignorance, impurity, idolatrous superstition, and wickedness prevail.”

4. We are not to attempt the particular explanation of those prophecies which remain to be fulfilled. *

Although many parts of the Apocalypse are necessarily obscure to us, because they contain predictions of events still future, yet enough is sufficiently clear to convey to us the most important religious instruction. The Revelation, says the eloquent Saurin, “is a very mortifying book to a mind eager in the pursuit of knowledge and science, but a very satisfying and agreeable one to a heart solicitous about maxims and precepts.” It is to us precisely what the prophecies of the Old Testament were to the Jews, nor is it in any degree more inexplicable. “No prophecies in the Revelation can be more clouded with obscurity, than that a child should be born of a

* Dr. Woodhouse's Translation of the Apocalypse, pp. xii—xix. Many of the observations in pp. 216—231, and particularly the cautions in pp. 235, 236, of this volume, are applicable to the interpretation of the Apocalypse.

pure virgin — that a mortal should not see corruption — that a person despised and numbered among malefactors should be established for ever on the throne of David. Yet still the *pious Jew* preserved his faith entire amidst all these wonderful, and, in appearance, contradictory intimations. He looked into the holy books in which they were contained, with reverence; and with an eye of patient expectation ‘waited for the consolation of Israel.’ We, in the same manner, look up to these prophecies of the Apocalypse, for the full consummation of the great scheme of the Gospel; when Christianity shall finally prevail over all the corruptions of the world, and be universally established in its utmost purity.” *

* Gilpin’s Exposition of the New Testament, vol. ii. p. 428.

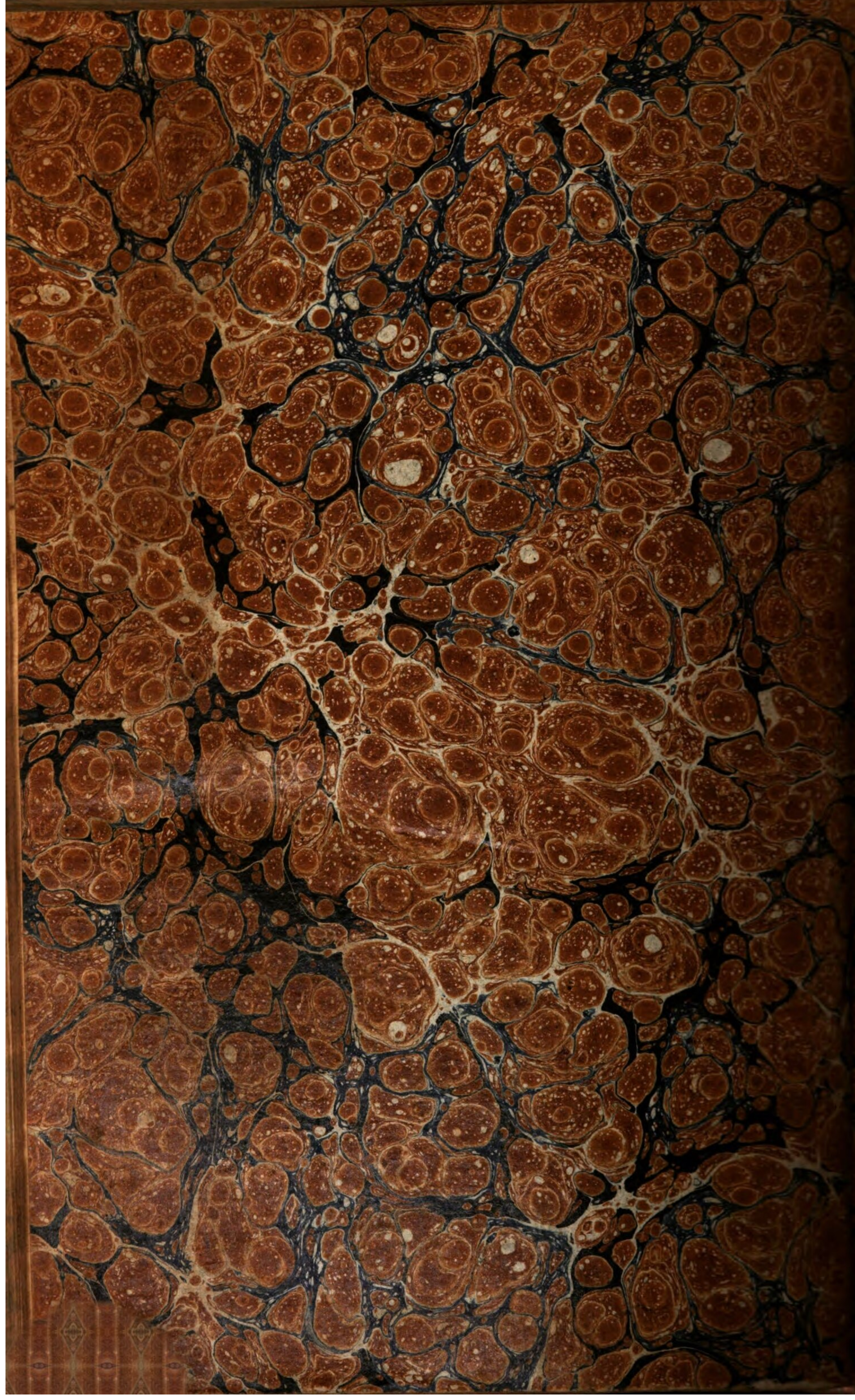
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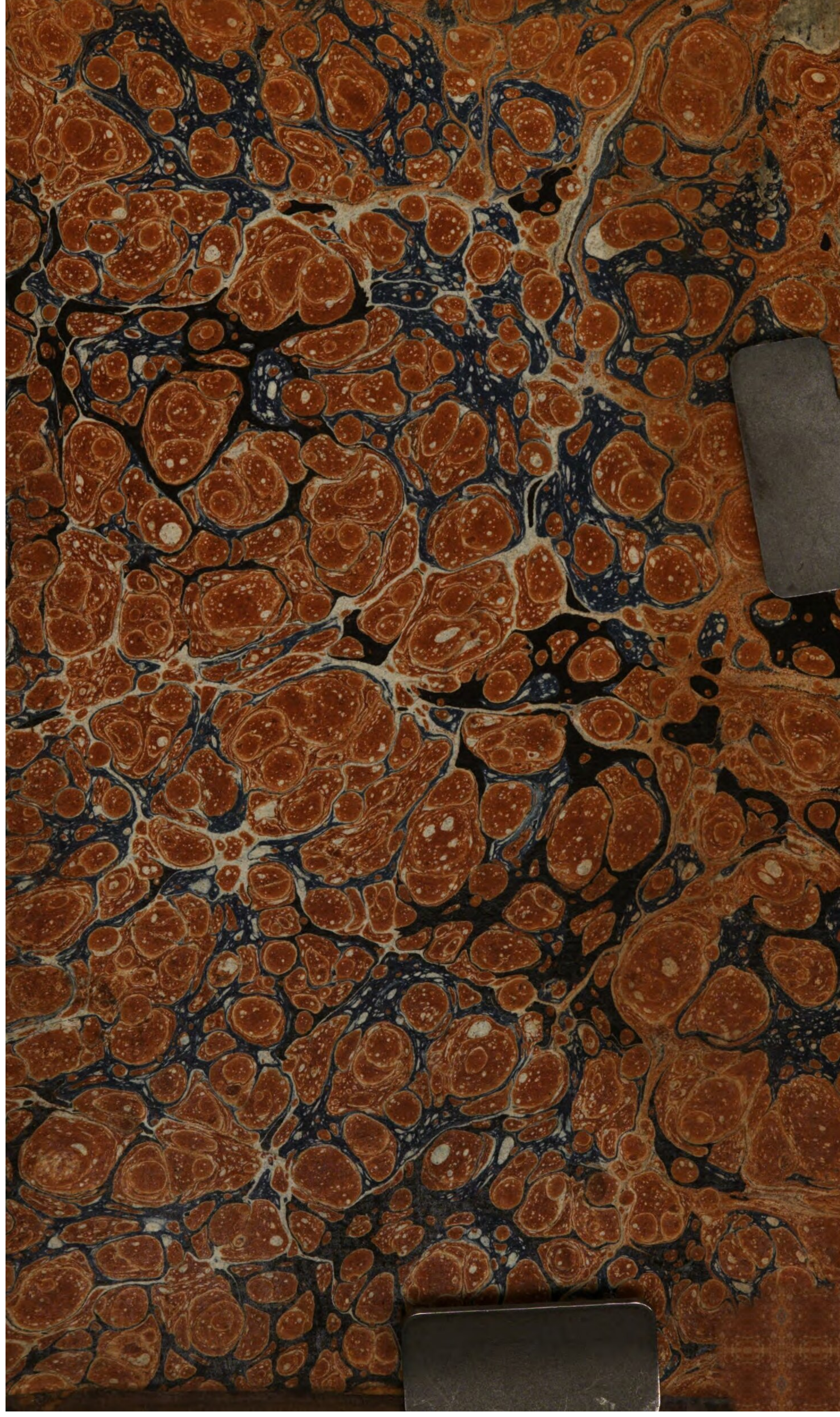
On the Revelation of Saint John the Divine

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CHAPTER I. — OF THE REVELATION OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE.

AND OF THE REVELATION OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE.





Horne, Thomas Hartwell

An introduction to the critical study and knowledge of the holy scriptures
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